THE

BELLE'S STRATAGEM:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY MRS. COWLEY.



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1825

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Doricourt
Hardy
Sir George Touchwood
Flutter
Saville
Villers
Courtall
Silvertongue
Crowquill
First Gentleman
Second Gentleman
Mountebank
French Servant
Porter
Dick

Letitia Hardy
Mrs Racket
Lady Frances Touchwood
Miss Ogle
Kitty Willis
Lady
Masquerade rs, Tradesmen, Servants, &c.

THE

BELLE'S STRATAGEM.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

LINCOLN'S-INN.

Enter Saville, followed by a Servant, at the top of the stage, looking round, as if at a loss.

Sav. Lincoln's-Inn!—Well but where to find him now I am in Lincoln's-Inn?—Where did he say his master was?

Serv. He only said in Lincoln's-Inn, sir.

Sav. That's pretty! And your wisdom never inquired at whose chambers?

Serv. Sir, you spoke to the servant yourself.

Sav. If I was too impatient to ask questions, you ought to have taken directions, blockhead!

Enter Courtall singing.

Ha, Courtall!—Bid him keep the horses in motion, and then inquire at all the chambers round.

[*exit servant.*

What the devil brings you to this part of the town?—Have any of the Long Robes, handsome wives, sisters or chambermaids?

Court. Perhaps they have; but I came on a different errand: and had thy good fortune brought thee here half an hour sooner, I'd have given thee such a treat, ha! ha! ha!

Sav. I'm sorry I miss'd it; what was it?

Court I was informed a few days since, that my cousins Fallow were come to town, and desired earnestly to see me at their lodgings in Warwick-Court, Holborn. Away drove I, painting them all the way as so many Hebes. They came from the farthest part of Northumberland, had never been in town, and in course were made up of rusticity, innocence, and beauty.

Sav. Well!

Court. After waiting thirty minutes, during which there was a violent bustle, in bounced five sallow damsels, four of them maypoles,—The fifth, Nature, by way of variety, had bent in the Æsop style—But they all opened at once, like hounds on a fresh scent:—"Oh, cousin Courtall!—How do you do, cousin Courtall! Lord, cousin, I am glad you are come! We want you to go with us to the Park, and the Plays, and the Opera, and Almack's and all the fine places!"——The devil, thought I, my dears, may attend you, for I am sure I won't—However, I heroically staid an hour with them, and discovered, the virgins were all come to town with the hopes of leaving it—Wives.—their heads full of Knight-Baronets. Fops, and adventures

Sav. Well, how did you get off?

Court Oh, pleaded a million engagements.—However, conscience twitched me; so I breakfasted with them this morning, and afterwards 'squired them to the gardens here, as the most private place in town; and then took a sorrowful leave, complaining of my hard, hard fortune, that obliged me to set off immediately for Dorsetshire, ha! ha! ha!

Sav. I congratulate your escape!—Courtall at 4*

mack's, with five awkward country cousins! ha! ha! ha!—Why, your existence, as a man of gallantry, could never have survived it.

Court. Death and fire! had they come to town, like the rustics of the last age, to see Paul's, the Lions, and the Wax-work—at their service;—but the cousins of our days come up ladies—and, with the knowledge they glean from magazines and pocket-books, fine ladies; laugh at the bashfulness of their grandmothers, and boldly demand their *entrées* in the first circles

Sav. Where can this fellow be!—Come, give me some news—I have been at war with woodcocks and partridges these two months, and am a stranger to all that has passed out of their region.

Court. Oh! enough for three Gazettes. The ladies are going to petition for a bill, that during the war, every man may have two wives.

Sav. 'Tis impossible they should succeed, for the majority of both Houses know what it is to have one.

Court. Gallantry was black ball'd at the *Coterie* last Thursday and Prudence and Chastity voted in.

Sav. Ay, that may hold 'till the camps break up.—But have ye no elopements? no divorces?

Court. Divorces are absolutely out, and the Commons-Doctors starving; so they are publishing trials of *Crim. Con.* with all the separate evidences at large; which they find has always a wonderful effect on their trade, action tumbling in upon them afterwards, like mackerel at Gravesend.

Sav. What more?

Court. Nothing—for weddings, deaths, and politics, I never talk of, but whilst my hair is dressing. But, prithee, Saville, how came you in town, whilst all the qualified gentry are playing at pop-gun, on Coxheath, and the country over-run with hares and

Sav. I came to meet my friend Doricourt, who, you know, is lately arrived from Rome

Court. Arrived! Yes, faith, and has cut us all out! —His carriage, his liveries, his dress, himself, are the rage of the day! His first appearance set the whole *Ton* in a ferment, and his valet is besieged by *levees* of taylors, habit-makers, and other ministers of fashion, to gratify the impatience of their customers for becoming *à la mode de Doricourt.* Nay, the beautiful Lady Frolic, t'other night, with two sister Countesses, insisted upon his waistcoat for muffs, and their snowy arms now bear it in triumph about town, to the heart-rending affliction of all our *Beaux Garçons.*

Sav. Indeed! Well, those little gallantries will soon be over; he's on the point of marriage.

Court. Marriage! Doricourt on the point of marriage! 'Tis the happiest tidings you could have given, next to his being hanged—Who is the bride elect?

Sav. I never saw her; but 'tis Miss Hardy, the rich heiress—the match was made by the parents, and the courtship begun on the nurses' knees; Master used to crow at Miss, and Miss used to chuckle at Master.

Court. Oh! then by this time they care no more for each other, than I do for my country cousins

Sav I don't know that; they have never met since thus high, and so, probably, have some regard for each other.

Court. Never met! Odd!

Sav. A whim of Mr. Hardy's; he thought his daughter's charms would make a more forcible impression, if her lover remained in ignorance of them till his return from the Continent.

Enter Saville's servant.

Serv. Mr. Doricourt, sir, has been at Counsellor Pleadwell's, and gone about five minutes.

[*exit servant.*

Sav. Five minutes! Zounds! I have been five

minutes too late all my life-time!—Good morrow, Courtall; I must pursue him. [*going.*

Court. Promise to dine with me to-day; I have some honest fellows. [*going off on the opposite side.*

Sav. Can't promise; perhaps I may.—See there, there's a bevy of female Patagonians, coming down upon us.

Court. By the Lord, then, it must be my strapping cousins—I dare not look behind me—Run, man, run. [*exit, on the same side.*

SCENE II.—A HALL AT DORICOURT'S.

A gentle knock at the door—Enter the Porter.

Port. Tap! What sneaking devil art thou? [*Opens the door.*

Enter Crowquill.

So! I suppose *you* are one of Monsieur's customers too? He's above stairs, now, overhauling all his honour's things to a parcel of 'em

Crowq. No, sir, it is with you, if you please, that I want to speak.

Port. Me! Well, what do you want with me?

Crowq. Sir, you must know that I am—I am the gentleman who writes the *Tete-a-tetes* in the Magazines.

Port. Oh, oh!—What, you are the fellow that ties folks together in your sixpenny cuts, that never meet any where else?

Crowq. Oh, dear sir, excuse me!—we always go on *foundation*; and if you can help me to a few anecdotes of your master, such as what Marchioness he lost money to, in Paris—who is his favourite lady in town—or the name of the girl he first made love to at College—or any incidents that happened to his grand-

mother, or great aunts—a couple will do By way of supporters—I'll weave a web of intrigues, losses, and gallantries, between them, that shall fill four pages, procure me a dozen dinners, and you, sir, a bottle of wine for your trouble.

Port. Oh, oh! I heard the butler talk of you, when I lived at Lord Tinket's. But what the devil do you mean by a bottle of wine!—You gave him a crown for a retaining fee

Crowq Oh, sir, that was for a Lord's amours; a commoner's are never but half Why, I have had a Baronet's for five shillings, though he was a married man, and chang'd his mistress every six weeks

Port Don't tell me! What signifies a Baronet, or a bit of a Lord, who, may be, was never further than sun and sun round London? *We* have travelled, man! My master has been in Italy, and over the whole island of Spain, talked to the Queen of France, and danced with her at a masquerade. Ay, and such folks don't go to masquerades for nothing; but mum—not a word more—Unless you'll rank my master with a Lord, I'll not be guilty of blabbing his secrets, I assure you.

Crowq. Well, sir, perhaps you'll throw in a hint or two of other families, where you've lived, that may be worked up into something, and so, sir, here is one, two, three, four, five shillings.

Port Well, that's honest, (*pocketing the money.*) To tell you the truth, I don't know much of my master's concerns yet;—but here comes Monsieur and his gang: I'll pump them; they have trotted after him all round Europe, from the Canaries to the Isle of Wight.

Enter several foreign Servants and two Tradesmen. The Porter takes one of them aside.

Tradesm. Well then, you have show'd us all?

Frenchm. All, *en verité*, *Messieurs!* you *avez* seen every ting. *Serviteur, serviteur.* [*Exeunt Tradesmen*

Ah, here comes one *autre* curious Englishman, and dat's one *autre* guinea *pour moi*.

Enter Saville.

Allons, Monsieur, dis way, I will show you tings, such tings you never see begar, in England!—Velvets by Le Mosse, suits by Verdue, trimmings by Grossette, embroidery by Delanville——

Sav. Puppy!—where is your master?

Port Zounds! you chattering frog-eating dunderhead, can't you see a gentleman?—'Tis Mr. Saville.

Frenchm Monsieur Saville! *Je suis mort de puir.*—Ten thousand pardons! *Excusez mon erreur*, and permit me you conduct to Monsieur Doricourt; he be too happy *a vous voir*.

[*exeunt Frenchman and Saville.*

Port Step below a bit;—we'll make it out somehow!—I suppose a slice of sirloin wo'nt make the story go down the worse.

[*exeunt Porter and Crowquill.*

SCENE III.—AN APARTMENT AT DORICOURT'S.

Enter Doricourt.

Doric. (*speaking to a servant behind*) I shall be too late for St James's, bid him come immediately.

Enter Frenchman and Saville

Frenchm Monsieur Saville. [*exit Frenchman.*

Doric. Most fortunate! My dear Saville, let the warmth of this embrace speak the pleasure of my heart.

Sav. Well, this is some comfort after the scurvy reception I met with in your hall!—I prepared my mind, as I came up stairs, for a *bon jour*, a grimace, and an *adieu*.

Doric. Why so?

Sav. Judging of the master from the rest of the family. What the devil is the meaning of that flock of

foreigners below, with their parchment faces and snuffy whiskers? What! can't an Englishman stand behind your carriage, buckle your shoe, or brush your coat?

Doric. Stale, my dear Saville, stale! Englishmen make the best soldiers, citizens, artizans, and philosophers in the world; but the very worst footmen. I keep French fellows and Germans, as the Romans kept slaves, because their own countrymen had minds too enlarged and haughty to descend with a grace to the duties of such a station.

Sav. A good excuse for a bad practice

Doric. On my honour, experience will convince you of its truth A Frenchman neither hears, sees, nor breathes, but as his master directs; and his whole system of conduct is comprised in one short word,—*Obedience!* An Englishman reasons, forms opinions, cogitates, and disputes; he is the mere creature of your will: the other, a being, conscious of equal importance in the universal scale with yourself: and is therefore your judge, whilst he wears your livery, and decides on your actions with the freedom of a censor.

Sav. And this in defence of a custom I have heard you execrate, together with all the adventitious manners imported by our travell'd gentry.

Doric. Ay, but that was at eighteen, we are always *very* wise at eighteen. But consider this point we go into Italy, where the sole business of the people is to study and improve the powers of music. we yield to the fascination, and grow enthusiasts in the charming science we travel over France, and see the whole kingdom composing ornaments, and inventing fashions: we condescend to avail ourselves of their industry, and adopt their modes: we return to England, and find the nation intent on the most important objects; Polity, Commerce, War, with all the Liberal Arts, employ her sons; the latent sparks glow afresh within our bosoms; the sweet follies of the Continent imperceptibly slide away, whilst senators, statesmen, pa-

triots, and heroes, emerge from the *virtu* of Italy, and frippery of France.

Sav. I may as well give it up! You had always the art of placing your faults in the best light; and I can't help loving you, faults and all; so, to start a subject which must please you, when do you expect Miss Hardy?

Dorie. Oh, the hour of expectation is past. She is arrived, and I this morning had the honors of an interview at Pleadwell's. The writings were ready; and, in obedience to the will of Mr Hardy, we met to sign and seal

Sav. Has the event answered? Did your heart leap, or sink, when you beheld your mistress?

Dorie. Faith, neither one nor t'other, she's a fine girl, as far as mere flesh and blood goes.——But——

Sav. But what?

Dorie. Why, she's *only* a fine girl; complexion, shape, and features, nothing more

Sav. Is not that enough?

Dorie. No! she should have spirit! fire! *l'air enjoué!* that something, that nothing, which every body feels, and which nobody can describe, in the resistless charmers of Italy and France

Sav. Thanks to the parsimony of my father, that kept me from travel! I would not have lost my relish for true unaffected English beauty, to have been quarrell'd for by all the belles of Versailles and Florence.

Dorie. Pho! thou hast no taste. *English* beauty! 'Tis insipidity; it wants the zest, it wants poignancy, Frank! Why, I have known a Frenchwoman, indebted to nature for no one thing but a pair of decent eyes, reckon in her suite as many Counts, Marquises, and *Petits Maitres*, as would satisfy three dozen of our first-rate toasts. I have known an Italian *Marquizina* make ten conquests in stepping from her carriage, and carry her slaves from one city to another, whose zeal

intrinsic beauty would have yielded to half the little *Grisettes* that pace your Mall on a Sunday.

Sav. And has Miss Hardy nothing of this?

Doric. If she has, she was pleased to keep it to herself. I was in the room half an hour before I could catch the colour of her eyes; and every attempt to draw her into conversation occasioned so cruel an embarrassment, that I was reduced to the necessity of news, French fleets, and Spanish captures, with her father.

Sav. So Miss Hardy, with only beauty, modesty, and merit, is doom'd to the arms of a husband who will despise her.

Doric. You are unjust. Though she has not inspir'd me with violent passion, my honour secures her felicity.

Sav. Come, come, Doricourt, you know very well that when the honour of a husband is *locum-tenens* for his heart, his wife must be as indifferent as himself, if she is not unhappy.

Doric. Pho! never moralize without spectacles. But, as we are on the tender subject, how did you bear Touchwood's carrying Lady Frances?

Sav. You know I never looked up to her with hope, and Sir George is every way worthy of her.

Doric. *A la mode Angloise*, a philosopher even in love.

Sav. Come, I detain you—you seem dress'd at all points, and of course have an engagement.

Doric. To St James's I dine at Hardy's, and accompany them to the masquerade in the evening: but breakfast with me to-morrow, and we'll talk of our old Companions; for I swear to you, Saville, the air of the continent has not effaced one youthful prejudice or attachment.

Sav. With an exception to the case of ladies and servants.

Doric. True: there I plead guilty: but I have never

yet found any man whom I could cordially take to my heart, and call friend, who was not born beneath a British sky, and whose heart and manners were not truly English. *Exit Doricourt and Saville*

SCENE IV. — AN APARTMENT AT MR. HARDY'S.

Villers seated on a sofa, reading.

Enter Flutter.

Flut. Hah, Villers, have you seen Mrs. Racket——Miss Hardy, I find is out.

Vill. I have not seen her yet. I have made a voyage to Lapland since I come in. (*flinging away the book*) A lady at her toilette is as difficult to be moved, as a Quaker. (*yawning*) What events have happened in the world since yesterday? have you heard?

Flut Oh, yes; I stopt at Tattersall's as I came by, and there I found Lord James Jessamy, Sir William Wilding, and Mr. ————. But, now I think of it, you sha'n't know a syllable of the matter; for I have been informed you never believe above one half of what I say.

Vill. My dear fellow, somebody has imposed upon you most egregiously! Half! Why, I never believe one tenth part of what you say; that is, according to the plain and literal expression. but, as I understand you, your intelligence is amusing.

Flut. That's very hard now, very hard. I never related a falsity in my life, unless I stumbled on it by mistake; and if it were otherwise, your dull matter-of-fact people are infinitely oblig'd to those warm imaginations which soar into fiction to amuse you; for, positively, the common events of this little dirty world are not worth talking about, unless you embellish 'em!—Ha! here comes Mrs. Racket. Adieu to weeds, I see! all

Enter Mrs. Racket.

Enter, madam, in all your charms! Villers has been abusing your toilette for keeping you so long, but I think we are much obliged to it, and so are you.

Mrs Rack. How so, pray? Good-morning t'ye both. Here, here's a hand apiece for you. (*they kiss her hands.*)

Flut. How so! Because it has given you so many beauties

Mrs. Rack Delightful compliment! What do you think of that, Villers?

Vill That he and his compliments are alike—— showy, but won't bear examining.——So you brought Miss Hardy to town last night?

Mrs. Rack Yes, I should have brought her before, but I had a fall from my horse, that confined me a week—I suppose in her heart she wished me hanged a dozen times an hour.

Flut Why?

Mrs. Rack Had she not an expecting lover in town all the time? She meets him this morning at the lawyer's. I hope she'll charm him, she's the sweetest girl in the world.

Vill. Vanity, like murder, will out. You have convinced me you think yourself more charming.

Mrs. Rack. How can that be?

Vill. No woman ever praises another, unless she thinks herself superior in the very perfections she allows.

Flut Nor no man ever rails at the sex, unless he is conscious he deserves their hatred.

Mrs. Rack Thank ye, Flutter—I'll owe ye a *bouquet* for that. I am going to visit the new married Lady Frances Touchwood. Who knows her husband?

Flut. Every body.

Mrs. Rack Is there not something odd in his character?

Vill. Nothing, but that he is passionately fond of his wife: and so petulant is his love, that he open'd the cage of a favourite bullfinch, and sent it to catch butterflies, because she rewarded its song with her kisses.

Mrs Hack. Intolerable monster! Such a brute deserves——

Vill. Nay, nay, nay, nay, this is your sex now—— Give a woman but one stroke of character, off she goes, like a ball from a racket; sees the whole man, marks him down for an angel or a devil, and so exhibits him to our acquaintance.—This monster! this brute! is one of the worthiest fellows upon earth; sound sense, and a liberal mind; but doats on his wife to such excess, that he quarrels with every thing she admires, and is jealous of her tippet and nosegay.

Mrs Hack. Oh, less love for me, kind Cupid! I can see no difference between the torment of such an affection, and hatred.

Flut. Oh, pardon me, inconceivable difference, inconceivable; I see it as clearly as your bracelet. In the one case the husband would say, as Mr. Snapper said the other day, Zounds! madam, do you suppose that *my* table, and *my* house, and *my* pictures!—*à-propos, des Bottes.* There was the divinest Plague of Athens sold yesterday at Langford's! the dead figures so natural, you would have sworn they had been alive! Lord Primrose bid five hundred—six, said Lady Carmine—a thousand, said Ingot the Nabob—Down went the hammer.—A *rouleau* for your bargain, said sir Jeremy Jingle. And what answer do you think Ingot made him.

Mrs Hack. Why, took the offer.

Flut. Sir, I would oblige you, but I buy this picture to place in the nursery: the children have already got Whittington and his Cat; 'tis just this size, and they'll make good companions.

Mrs. Rack. Ha! ha! ha! Well, I protest that's just the way now—the nabobs and their wives outbid one at every sale, and the creatures have no more taste—

Vill. There again! You forget this story is told by Flutter, who always remembers every thing but the circumstances and the person he talks about;—'twas Ingot who offered a *rouleau* for the bargain, and Sir Jeremy Jingle who made the reply.

Flut. Egad, I believe you are right—Well, the story is as good one way as t'other, you know. Good morning. I am going to Mrs Crotchet's concert, and in my way back I shall make my bow at St. George's. (*going*)

Vill. I'll venture every figure in your taylor's bill, you make some blunder there.

Flut. (*turning back*) Done! my taylor's bill has not been paid these two years; and I'll open my mouth with as much care as Mrs. Bridget Button, who wears cork plumpers in each cheek, and never hazards more than six words for fear of shewing them. [*exit* Flutter.

Mrs Rack. 'Tis a good-natur'd insignificant creature! let in every where, and cared for no where—There's Miss Hardy returned from Lincoln's Inn, she seems rather chagrin'd.

Vill. Then I leave you to your communications.

Enter Letitia, followed by her Maid.

Adieu! I am rejoiced to see you so well, madam; but I must tear myself away.

Let. Don't vanish in a moment.

Vill. Oh, inhuman! you are two of the most dangerous women in town—staying here to be cannonaded by four such eyes, is equal to a *rencontre* with Paul Jones, or a midnight march to Omoa!—They'll swallow the nonsense for the sake of the compliment. (*aside*) [*exit* Villers.

Let. (*gives her cloak to her maid*) Order Du Quesne.

never to come again; he shall positively dress my hair no more (*exit Maid*) And this odious silk, how unbecoming it is!—I was bewitched to choose it (*throwing herself on a sofa, and looking in a pocket glass, Mrs. Racket staring at her*) Did you ever see such a fright as I am to-day?

Mrs Rack. Yes, I have seen you look much worse

Let How can you be so provoking? If I do not look this morning worse than ever I looked in my life, I am naturally a fright. You shall have it which way you will

Mrs Rack Just as you please, but pray what is the meaning of all this?

Let. (*crying*) Men are all dissemblers! flatterers! deceivers! have I not heard a thousand times of my air, my eyes, my shape—all made for victory! and to-day, when I bent my whole heart on one poor conquest, I have proved that all those imputed charms amount to nothing,—for Doricourt saw them unmov'd.—A husband of fifteen months could not have examined me with more cutting indifference.

Mrs Rack Then you return it like a wife of fifteen months, and be as indifferent as he.

Let. Ay, there's the sting! The blooming boy, who left his image in my young heart, is at four and twenty improved in every grace that fixed him there. It is the same face that my memory, and my dreams, constantly painted to me; but its graces are finished, and every beauty heightened. How mortifying, to feel myself at the same moment his slave, and an object of perfect indifference to him!

Mrs. Rack. Now are you certain that is the case? Did you expect him to kneel down before the lawyer, his clerks, and your father, to make oath of your beauty?

Let No; but he should have looked as if a sudden ray had pierced him! he should have been breathless! speechless! for oh! Caroline, all this was I,

Mrs Rack. I am sorry you was such a fool. Can you expect a man, who has courted and been courted by half the fine women in Europe, to feel like a girl from a boarding-school? He is the prettiest fellow you have seen, and in course bewilders your imagination; but he has seen a million of pretty women, child, before he saw you; and his first feelings have been over long ago

Let. Your raillery distresses me; but I will touch his heart, or never be his wife.

Mrs Rack Absurd, and romantic! If you have no reason to believe his heart pre-engaged, be satisfied; if he is a man of honour, you'll have nothing to complain of

Let Nothing to complain! Heavens! shall I marry the man I adore, with such an expectation as that?

Mrs Rack. And when you have fretted yourself pale, my dear, you'll have mended your expectation greatly

Let (*pausing*) Yet I have one hope If there is any power whose peculiar care is faithful love, that power! invoke to aid me.

Enter Mr Hardy.

Har. Well, now; wasn't I right? Aye, Letty! Aye, cousin Racket! wasn't I right? I knew 'twould be so He was all agog to see her before he went abroad! and, if he had, he'd have thought no more of her face, may be, than his own.

Mrs Rack. May be, not half so much.

Har Aye, may be so —but I see into things; exactly as I foresaw, to-day he fell desperately in love with the wench, he! he! he!

Let Indeed, sir! how did you perceive it?

Har. That's a pretty question! How do I perceive every thing? How did I foresee the fall of corn, and the rise of taxes? How did I know, that if we quarrelled with America, Norway deals would be dearer?

How did I foretell that a war would sink the funds. How did I forewarn parson Homily, that if he didn't some way or other contrive to get more votes than Rubrick, he'd lose the lectureship? How did I——But what the devil makes you so dull, Letitia? I thought to have found you popping about as brisk as the jacks of your harpsichord

Let. Surely, sir, 'tis a very serious occasion.

Har. Pho, pho! girls should never be grave before marriage How did you feel, cousin, beforehand? Aye!

Mrs. Rack. Feel! why exceedingly full of cares.

Har Did you?

Mrs Rack I could not sleep for thinking of my coach, my liveries, and my chairmen: the taste of clothes I should be presented in, distracted me for a week, and whether I should be married in white or lilac, gave me the most cruel anxiety

Let. And is it possible that you felt no other care?

Har. And pray of what sort may your cares be Miss Letitia? I begin to foresee now that you have taken a dislike to Doricourt

Let. Indeed, sir, I have not

Har Then what's all this melancholy about? A'n't you going to be married? and, what's more, to a sensible man? and, what's more, to a young girl, to a handsome man? and what's all this melancholy for, I say?

Mrs. Rack Why, because he *is* handsome and sensible——and because she's over head and ears in love with him; all which, it seems, your foreknowledge had not told you a word of.

Let. Fie, Caroline

Har. Well, come, do you tell me what's the matter, then? If you don't like him, hang the signing and sealing, he sha'n't have ye,—and yet I can't say that neither, for you know that estate, that cost his father and me upwards of fourscore thousand pounds.

must go all to him if you won't have him: if he won't have you, indeed, 'twill be all yours. All that's clear, engrossed upon parchment, and the poor dear man set his hand to it, whilst he was a dying.—'Ah!' said I, 'I foresee you'll never live to see 'em come together: but their first son shall be christened Jeremiah after you, that I promise you.'——But come, I say, what is the matter? Dont you like him?

Let. I fear, sir—if I must speak—I fear I was less agreeable in Mr. Doricourt's eyes, than he appeared in mine.

Har. There you are mistaken for I asked him, and he told me he liked you vastly. Don't you think he must have taken a fancy to her?

Mrs Rack. Why really I think so, as I was not by.

Let. My dear sir, I am convinced he has not, but if there is spirit or invention in woman, he shall.

Har. Right, girl, go to your toilette—

Let. It is not my toilette that can serve me: but a plan has struck me, if you will not oppose it, which flatters me with brilliant success.

Har. Oppose it! not I indeed! What is it?

Let. Why, sir—it may seem a little paradoxical; but, as he does not like me enough, I want him to like me still less, and will at our next interview endeavour to heighten his indifference into dislike.

Har. Who the devil could have foreseen that?

Mrs. Rack. Heaven and earth! Letitia, are you serious?

Let. As serious as the most important business my life demands.

Mrs Rack. Why endeavour to make him dislike you?

Let. Because 'tis much easier to convert a sentiment into its opposite, than to transform indifference into tender passion.

Mrs Rack. That may be good philosophy, but I am afraid you'll find it a bad maxim.

Let I have the strongest confidence in it. I am inspired with unusual spirits, and on this hazard willingly stake my chance for happiness I am impatient

Har. Can you foresee the end of this, cousin?

Mrs. Rack. No, sir nothing less than your penetration can do that, I am sure, and I can't stay now to consider it I am going to call on the Ogles, and then to Lady Frances Touchwood's, and then to an Auction, and then—I don't know where—but I shall be at home time enough to witness this extraordinary interview. Good-bye [*exit Mrs. Racket.*

Har. Well, 'tis an odd thing—I can't understand it—but I foresee Letty will have her way, and so I sha'n't give myself the trouble to dispute it.

[*exit Hardy.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S.

Enter Doricourt and Sir George.

Dori. Married, ha! ha! ha! you, whom I heard in Paris say such things of the sex, are in London a married man.

Sir Geo. The sex is still what it has ever been since *la petite morale* banished substantial virtues, and rather than have given my name to one of your high-bred fashionable dames, I'd have crossed the line in a fire-ship, and married a Japanese.

Doric. Yet you have married an English beauty, 'vea, and a beauty born in high life

Sir Geo. True, but she has a simplicity of heart and manners, that would have become the fair Hebrew damsels toasted by the patriarchs

Doric. Ha! ha! why, thou art a downright matrimonial Quixote. My life on't, she becomes as much a town lady, in six months as though she had been bred to the trade

Sir Geo. Common---common---(*contemptuously*) No, sir, Lady Frances despises high life so much from the ideas I have given her, that she'll live in it like a salamander in fire

Doric. Oh, that the cuckoo *dans la place Victoire* could witness thy extravagance! I'll send thee off to St. Evreux this night, drawn at full length, and coloured after nature.

Sir Geo. Tell him then, to add to the ridicule, that Touchwood glories in the name of husband, that he has found in one Englishwoman more beauty than Frenchmen ever saw, and more goodness than Frenchwomen can conceive

Doric. Well---enough of description. Introduce me to this Phœnix; become on purpose.

Sir Geo. Introduce!---oh, aye, to be sure---I believe Lady Frances is engaged just now---but another time. How handsome the dog looks to-day! (*aside*)

Doric. Another time!---but I have no other time 'Sdeath! this is the only hour I can command this fortnight!

Sir Geo. (*aside*) I am glad to hear it, with all my soul. So then, you can't dine with us to-day? That's very unlucky.

Doric. Oh, yes-- as to dinner---yes, I can, I believe, contrive to dine with you to-day.

Sir Geo. Psha! I did'nt think on what I was saying; I meant supper-- you can't sup with us?

Doric. Why, supper would be rather more con-

venient than dinner---But you are fortunate---if you had asked me any other night, I could not have come.

Sir Geo. To night!----Gad, now I recollect, we are particularly engaged to night ----But to-morrow night---

Dorie. Why look ye, Sir George, 'tis very plain you have no inclination to let me see your wife at all, so here I sit (*throws himself on a sofa*)---There's my hat, and here are my legs ---Now I sha'n't stir till I have seen her, and I have no engagements. I'll breakfast, dine, and sup with you every day this week.

Sir Geo. Was there ever such a provoking wretch! But to be plain with you, Doricourt, I and my house are at your service: but you are a damn'd agreeable fellow, and ten years younger than I am, and the women, I observe, always simper when you appear. For these reasons, I had rather, when Lady Frances and I are together, that you should forget we are acquainted, further than a nod, a smile, or a how-d'ye.

Dorie. Very well.

Sir Geo. It is not merely yourself *in propria persona* that I object to, but, if you are intimate here, you'll make my house still more the fashion than it is; and it is already so much so that my doors are of no use to me. I married Lady Frances to engross her to myself; yet such is the blessed freedom of modern manners, that, in spite of me, her eyes, thoughts and conversation, are continually divided among all the flirts and coxcombs of fashion.

Dorie. To be sure, I confess that kind of freedom is carried rather too far. 'Tis hard one can't have a jewel in one's cabinet, but the whole town must be gratified with its lustre. He shan't preach me out of seeing his wife. (*aside*)

Sir Geo. Well now, that's reasonable. When you take time to reflect, Doricourt, I always observe you decide right, and therefore I hope

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lady desires——

Sir Geo. I am particularly engaged.

Doric. Oh, Lord, that shall be no excuse in the world (*leaping from the sofa*) Lead the way John. I'll attend your lady [*exit, following the servant.*

Sir Geo. What devil possessed me to talk about her?—Here, Doricourt! (*running after him*) Doricourt!

Enter Mrs. Racket, and Miss Ogle, followed by a Servant.

Mrs Rack. Acquaint your lady that Mrs. Racket, and Miss Ogle are here [*exit servant*

Miss Ogle. I shall hardly know Lady Frances, 'tis so long since I was in Shropshire

Mrs Rack. And I'll be sworn you never saw her *out* of Shropshire Her father kept her locked up with his caterpillers and shells, and loved her beyond any thing—but a blue butterfly, and a petrified frog!

Miss Ogle. Ha! ha! ha!—Well, 'twas a cheap way of breeding her—you know he was very poor, though a Lord; and very high-spirited, though a Virtuoso In town, her pantheons, operas, and robes de cour, would have swallowed his sea-weeds, moths, and monsters, in six weeks!—Sir George, I find, thinks his wife a most extraordinary creature. he has taught her to despise every thing like fashionable life, and boasts that example will have no effect on her.

Mrs. Rack. There's a great degree of impertinence in all that—I'll try to make her a fine lady, to humble Jim.

Miss Ogle. That's just the thing I wish.

Enter Lady Frances.

Lady Fran. I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear Mrs. Racket Miss Ogle I rejoice to see you. I should have come to you sooner, but I was detained in conversation by Mr Doricourt.

Mrs Rack Pray make no apology, I am quite happy that we have your ladyship in town at last.—What stay do you make?

Lady Fran. A short one! Sir George talks with regret of the scenes we have left, and as the ceremony of presentation is over, will, I believe, soon return.

Miss Ogle Sure he can't be so cruel! Does your ladyship wish to return so soon?

Lady Fran I have not the habit of consulting my own wishes: but, I think, if they decide, we shall not return immediately. I have yet hardly formed an idea of London

Mrs. Rack I shall quarrel with your lord and master, if he dares think of depriving us of you so soon — How do you dispose of yourself to-day?

Lady Fran Sir George is going with me this morning to the mercer's, to choose a silk, and then——

Mrs. Rack Choose a silk for you! ha! ha! ha! Sir George chooses your laces too, I hope, your gloves, and your pincushions!

Lady Fran. Madam!

Mrs Rack I am glad to see you blush, my dear Lady Frances These are strange homespun ways! If you do these things, pray keep 'em secret Lord bless us! If the town should know your husband chooses your gowns!

Miss Ogle You are very young, my lady, and have been brought up in solitude The maxims you learnt among the wood-nymphs in Shropshire, won't pass current here I assure you.

Mrs. Rack. Why, my dear creature, you look quite frighten'd!—Come, you shall go with us to an Exhibition, and an Auction. Afterwards, we'll take a turn in the Park, and then drive to Kensington; so we shall be at home by four, to dress, and in the evening I'll attend you to Lady Brilliant's masquerade.

Lady Fran. I shall be very happy to be of your party, if Sir George has no engagements

Mrs Rack What! do you stand so low in your own opinion, that you dare not trust yourself without Sir George! If you choose to play Darby and Joan, my dear, you should have stay'd in the country; 'tis an exhibition not calculated for London, I assure you!

Miss Ogle What! suppose, my lady, you and Sir George, will be seen pacing it comfortably round the canal, arm in arm, and then go lovingly into the same carriage, dine *tete-a-tete*, spend the evening at picquet, and so go soberly to bed at eleven! such a snug plan may do for an attorney and his wife; but, for Lady Frances Touchwood, 'tis as unsuitable as linsey-woolsey, or a black bonnet at the *Festino!*

Lady Fran These are rather new doctrines to me! --But, my dear Mrs Racket, you and Miss Ogle must judge of these things better than I can As you observe, I am but young, and may have caught absurd opinions. Here is Sir George!

Enter Sir George.

Sir George (*aside*) 'Sdeath! another room full!

Lady Fran. My love! Mrs Racket, and the Miss Ogles.

Mrs Rack. Give you joy, Sir George We came to rob you of Lady Frances for a few hours

Sir Geo A few hours!

Lady Fran. Oh, yes! I am going to an exhibition, and an auction, and the Park, and Kensington, and a thousand places!—It is quite ridiculous, I think, for married people to be always together—we shall be laughed at.

Sir. Geo. I am astonished! Mrs. Racket, what does the dear creature mean?

Mrs Rack. Mean, Sir George! what she says I imagine

Miss Ogle. Why, you know, sir, as Lady Frances had the misfortune to be bred entirely in the country,

she cannot be supposed to be versed in fashionable life.

Sir Geo. No; heaven forbid she should! If she had, madam, she would have never been my wife!

Mrs. Rack. Are you serious?

Sir Geo. Perfectly so. I should never have had the courage to have married a well-bred fine lady.

Miss Ogle. Pray, sir, what do you take a fine lady to be, that you express such fear of her? [*sneeringly.*

Sir Geo. A being easily described, madam, as she is seen every where but in her own house. She sleeps at home, but she lives all over the town. In her mind, every sentiment gives place to the lust of conquest, and the vanity of being particular. The feelings of wife, and mother, are lost in the whirl of dissipation. If she continues virtuous, 'tis by chance—and if she preserves her husband from ruin, 'tis by her dexterity at the card table!—Such a woman I take to be a perfect fine lady!

Mrs. Rack. And you I take to be a slanderous Cynic of two-and-thirty.—Twenty years hence, one might have forgiven such a libel!—Now, sir, hear my definition of a fine lady.—She is a creature for whom nature has done much, and education more. she has taste, elegance, spirit, understanding. In her manner she is free, in her morals nice. Her behaviour is undistinguishingly polite to her husband, and all mankind. her sentiments are for their hours of retirement. In a word, a fine lady is the life of conversation, the spirit of society, the joy of the public!—Pleasure follows wherever she appears, and the kindest wishes attend her slumbers.—Make haste, then, my dear Lady Frances, commence fine lady and force your husband to acknowledge the justness of my picture!

Lady Fran. I am sure 'tis a delightful one. How can you dislike it, Sir George? You painted fashionable life in colours so disgusting, that I thought I hated it: but on a nearer view, it seems charming. I have

hitherto lived in obscurity; 'tis time that I should be a woman of the world. I long to begin,—my heart pants with expectation and delight!

Mrs Rack. Come, then, let us begin directly I am impatient to introduce you to that society, which you were born to ornament and charm

Lady Fran Adieu! my love!—We shall meet again at dinner. [*going.*

Sir Geo. Sure, I am in a dream!—Fanny!

Lady Fran (*returning*) Sir George?

Sir Geo Will you go without me?

Mrs Rack. Will you go without me!—ha! ha! ha! what a pathetic address! Why, sure you would not always be seen side by side, like two beans on a stalk. Are you afraid to trust Lady Frances with me, sir?

Sir Geo Heaven and earth! with whom can a man trust his wife in the present state of society? Formerly there were distinctions of character amongst ye every class of females had its particular description, grandmothers were pious, aunts discreet, old maids censorious! but now aunts, grandmothers, girls, and maiden gentlewomen, are all the same creature,—a wrinkle more or less is the sole difference between you.

Mrs. Rack. That maiden gentlewomen have lost their censoriousness, is surely not in your catalogue of grievances.

Sir Geo. Indeed it is—and ranked among the most serious grievances. Things went well, madam, when the tongues of three or four old virgins kept all the wives and daughters of a parish in awe They were the dragons that guarded the Hesperian fruit; and I wonder they have not been obliged, by act of parliament, to resume their function

Mrs Rack Ha! ha! ha! and pensioned, I suppose, for making strict inquiries into the lives and conversations of their neighbours.

Sir Geo. With all my heart, and empowered to oblige every woman to conform her conduct to her

real situation. You, for instance, are a widow; your air should be sedate, your dress grave, your deportment matronly, and in all things an example to the young women growing up about you'---instead of which, you are dress'd for conquest, think of nothing but ensnaring hearts; are a coquette, wit, and a fine lady.

Mrs Rack. Bear witness to what he says! a coquette! a wit! and a fine lady! Who would have expected an eulogy from such an ill-natured mortal!--- Valour to a soldier, wisdom to a judge, and glory to a prince, is not more than such a character to a woman.

Miss Ogle. Sir George, I see, languishes for the charming society of a century and a half ago, when a grave 'Squire, and a still graver Dame, surrounded by a sober family, formed a stiff groupe in a mouldy old house in the corner of a Park.

Mrs Rack. Delightful serenity! Undisturbed by any noise but the cawing of rooks, and the quarterly rumbling of an old family-coach on a state-visit, with the happy intervention of a friendly call from the parish apothecary, or the curate's wife.

Sir Geo. And what is the society of which you boast?---a mere chaos, in which all distinction of rank is lost in a ridiculous affectation of ease, and every different order of beings huddled together, as they were before the creation. In the same *select party*, you will often find the wife of a bishop and a sharper, of an earl and a fiddler. In short, 'tis one universal masquerade, all disguised in the same habits and manners.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Flutter. [*exit servant.*

Sir Geo. Here comes an illustration. Now I defy you to tell from his appearance, whether Flutter is a privy counsellor or a mercer, a lawyer or a grocer's 'prentice.

Enter Flutter.

Flut. Oh, just which you please, Sir George; so you

don't make me a lord mayor. Ah, Mrs. Racket!—Lady Frances, your most obedient; you look—now hang me, if that's not provoking!—had your gown been of another colour, I should have said the prettiest thing you ever heard in your life.

Miss Ogle. Pray give it us.

Flut. I was yesterday at Mrs. Bloomer's. She was dressed all in green, no other colour to be seen but that of her face and bosom. So says I, my dear Mrs. Bloomer! you look like a carnation, just bursting from its pod.

Sir Geo. And what said her husband?

Flut. Her husband! Why, her husband laughed, and said a cucumber would have been a happier simile.

Sir Geo. But there *are* husbands, sir, who would rather have corrected than amended your comparison. I, for instance, should consider a man's complimenting my wife as an impertinence.

Flut. Why, what harm can there be in compliments? Sure they are not infectious, and if they were, you, Sir George, of all people breathing, have reason to be satisfied about your lady's attachment, every body talks of it. that little bird there, that she killed out of jealousy, the most extraordinary instance of affection that ever was given.

Lady Fran. I kill a bird through jealousy!—Heavens! Mr Flutter, how can you impute such a cruelty to me?

Sir Geo. I could have forgiven you, if you had.

Flut. Oh, what a blundering fool!—No, no—now I remember—'twas your bird, Lady Frances—that's it; your bullfinch, which Sir George, in one of the refinements of his passion, sent into the wide world to seek its fortune.—He took it for a Knight in disguise.

Lady Fran. Is it possible! O, Sir George, could I have imagined it was you who deprived me of a creature I was so fond of!

Sir Geo. Mr. Flutter, you are one of those busy, idle, meddling people, who, from mere vacuity of mind, are the most dangerous inmates in a family. You have neither feelings nor opinions of your own, but, like a glass in a tavern, bear about those of every blockhead, who gives you his;—and, because you *mean* no harm, think yourselves excused, though broken friendships, discords, and murders, are the consequences of your indiscretions.

Flut. (*taking out his tablets*) Vacuity of mind!—What was the next? I'll write down this sermon; 'tis the first I have heard since my grandmother's funeral.

Miss Ogle. Come Lady Frances, you see what a cruel creature your loving husband can be, so let us leave him.

Sir Geo. Madam, Lady Frances shall not go.

Lady Fran. *Shall* not, Sir George?—This is the first time such an expression—(*weeping.*)

Sir Geo. My love! my life!

Lady Fran. Don't imagine I'll be treated like a child! denied what I wish, and then pacified with sweet words.

Miss Ogle. (*apart*) The bullfinch? that's an excellent subject; never let it down.

Lady Fran. I see plainly you would deprive me of every pleasure, as well as of my sweet bird—out of pure love!—barbarous man!

Sir Geo. 'Tis well, madam;—your resentment of that circumstance proves to me, what I did not before suspect that you are deficient both in tenderness and understanding.—Tremble to think the hour approaches, in which you would give worlds for such a proof of my love. Go, madam, give yourself to the public, abandon your heart to dissipation, and see if, in the scenes of gaiety and folly that await you, you can find a recompense for the lost affection of a doating husband.—[*Exit Sir George.*

Lady Fran. [illegible]

Flut Lord! what a fine thing it is to have the gift of speech! I suppose Sir George practises at Coach-maker's-hall, or the Black horse in Bond street

Lady Fran. He is really angry, I cannot go

Mrs. Rack Not go! foolish creature! you are arrived at the moment, which some time or other was sure to happen; and every thing depends on the use you make of it.

Miss Ogle Come, Lady Frances! don't hesitate! the minutes are precious.

Lady Fran I could find in my heart!—and yet I won't give up neither,—If I should in this instance, he'll expect it for ever.

[*exeunt Lady Frances and Mrs. Rackit.*

Miss Ogle. Now you act like a woman of spirit.

[*exit Miss Ogle*

Flut. A fair lug, by Jupiter—between duty and pleasure!—Pleasure beats, and off we go, *Io triumphe!*

[*exit Flutter.*

SCENE II.—AN AUCTION ROOM—BUSTS, PICTURES, &c.

Enter Silvertongue, with three Puffers.

Sil Very well,—very well.—This morning will be devoted to curiosity; my sale begins to-morrow at eleven But, Mrs Fagg, if you do no better than you did in Lord Filagree's sale, I shall discharge you.—You want a knack terribly, and this dress—why, nobody can mistake you for a gentlewoman

Fag. Very true, Mr. Silvertongue, but I can't dress like a lady upon half a crown a day, as the saying is—If you want me to dress like a lady, you must double my pay ——Double or quits, Mr Silvertongue.

Sil.——*Five shillings* a day!, what a demand! why, woman, there are a thousand parsons in the

town, who don't make five shillings a day; though they preach, pray, christen, marry, and bury, for the good of community—Five shillings a day!—why, 'tis the pay of a Lieutenant in a marching regiment, who keeps a servant, a mistress, a horse, fights, dresses, ogles, makes love, and dies upon five shillings a day.

Fag Oh, as to that, all that's very right. A soldier should not be too fond of life; and forcing him to do all these things upon five shillings a day, is the readiest way to make him tired on't

Sil Well, Mask have you been looking into the Antiquares?—Have you got all the terms of art in a string—aye?

Mask Yes, I have: I know the age of a coin by the taste and can fix the birth-day of a medal, *Anno Mundi* or *Anno Domini*, though the green rust should have eaten up every character But you know, the brown suit and the wig I wear when I personate the Antiquary are in limbo.

Sil Those you have on, may do.

Mask These!—Why, in these I am a young travelled *Cognoscento* Mr Glib bought them of Sir Tom Totter's valet, and I am going there directly You know his picture sale comes on to day: and I have got my head full of Parmegiano, Sal Rosa, Metzu, Tarback, and Vandermeer I talk of the relief of Woovermans, the spirit of Teniers, the colouring of the Venetian school and the correctness of the Roman. I distinguish Claude by his sleep, and Ruysdeal by his water The rapidity of Tintoret's pencil strikes me at the first glance, whilst the harmony of Vandyk, and the glow of Correggio, point out their masters.

Enter Company.

1*st Lady*. Heyday, Mr. Silvertongue! what nobody here!

Sil Oh, my lady, we shall have company enough

in a trice; if your carriage is seen at my door, no other will pass it, I am sure.

1st Lady. Familiar monster! (*aside.*) That's a beautiful Diana, Mr. Silvertongue; but in the name of wonder, how came Actæon to be placed on the top of the house?

Sil. That's a David and Bathsheba, ma'am.

Lady. Oh, I crave their pardon!——I remember the names, but know nothing of the story.

More Company enters.

1st Gent. Was not that Lady Frances Touchwood, coming up with Mrs. Racket?

2d Gent. I think so;——yes, it is, faith.——Let us go nearer.

Enter Lady Frances, Mrs. Racket, and Miss Ogle.

Sil. Yes, sir, this is to be the first lot:—the model of a city, in wax.

2d Gent. The model of a city? what city?

Sil. That I have not been able to discover, but call it Rome, Pekin, or London, 'tis still a city: you'll find in it the same jarring interests, the same passions, the same virtues, and the same vices, whatever the name.

Gent. You may as well present us a map of *Terra Incognita.*

Sil. Oh, pardon me, sir! a lively imagination would convert this waxen city into an endless and interesting amusement. For instance—look into this little house on the right hand; there are four old prudes in it, taking care of their neighbour's reputation. This elegant mansion on the left, decorated with Corinthian pillars—who needs be told that it belongs to a court lord, and is the habitation of patriotism, philosophy, and virtue? Here's a city hall—the rich steams that issue from the windows, nourish a neighbouring workhouse. Here's a church—we'll pass over that, the doors are shut. The parsonage-house comes next;—we'll take a peep here, however.—Look at the doctor! he's asleep on a volume of Toland; whilst his lady

is putting on *rouge* for the masquerade.—Oh! oh! this can be no English city, our parsons are all orthodox, and their wives the daughters of modesty and meekness

Lady Frances and Miss Ogle come forward followed by Courtall.

Lady Fran I wish Sir George was here.——This man follows me about, and stares at me in such a way, that I am quite uneasy

Miss Ogle He has travelled, and is heir to an immense estate, so he's impertinent by patent.

Court You are very cruel, ladies Miss Ogle—you will not let me speak to you. As to this little scornful beauty, she has frowned me dead fifty times

Lady Fran Sir—I am a married woman (*confused*)

Court. A married woman! a good hint (*aside*) 'Twould be a shame if such a charming woman was not married But I see you are a Daphne just come from your sheep, and your meadows: your crook and your water-falls Pray now, who is the happy Damon, to whom you have vowed eternal truth and constancy?

Miss Ogle. 'Tis Lady Frances Touchwood, Mr. Courtall, to whom you are speaking

Court Lady Frances! by heaven, that's Saville's old flame (*aside*) I beg your ladyship's pardon. I ought to have believed that such beauty could belong only to your name——a name I have long been enamoured of, because I knew it to be that of the finest woman in the world.

Mrs. Racket comes forward.

Lady Fran (*apart*) My dear Mrs. Racket, I am so frightened! Here's a man making love to me, though he knows I am married.

Mrs. Rack. Oh, the sooner for that, my dear; don't mind him. Was you at the *Cassino* last night, Mr. Courtall?

Court. I looked in——'Twas impossible to stay,

Nobody there but antiques. You'll be at Lady Brilliant's to night, doubtless?

Mrs Rack Yes, I go with Lady Frances.

Lady Fran. Bless me! I did not know this gentleman was acquainted with Mrs Racket.—I behaved so rude to him (*to Miss Ogle*)

Mrs. Rack. Come, Ma'am, (*looking at her watch*) 'tis past one * I protest, if we don't fly to Kensington, we sha'n't find a soul there

Lady Fran. Won't this gentleman go with us?

Court. (*looking surprised*) To be sure, you make me happy, madam, beyond description.

Mrs Rack. Oh, never mind him—he'll follow.

(*exeunt Lady Frances, Mrs Racket, and Miss Ogle.*

Court Lady *Touchwood!* with a vengeance! But, 'tis always so:—your reserved ladies are like ice, 'egad!—no sooner begin to soften than they melt

(*following.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

MR. HARDY'S

Enter Letitia and Mrs. Racket.

Mrs. Rack. Come, prepare, prepare, your lover is coming.

Let. My lover!—Confess now that my absence at dinner was a severe mortification to him.

Mrs. Rack. I can't absolutely swear it spoilt his appetite, he eat as if he was hungry, and drank his wine as though he liked it

Let. What was the apology?

Mrs Rack. That you were ill;---but I gave him a hint, that your extreme bashfulness could not support his eye.

Let. If I comprehend him, awkwardness and bashfulness are the last faults that he can pardon in a woman; so expect to see me transformed into the veriest maukin

Mrs Rack. You persevere then?

Let. Certainly. I know the design is a rash one, and the event important;-- it either makes Doricourt mine by all the tenderest ties of passion, or deprives me of him for ever, and never to be his wife will afflict me less, than to be his wife and not be beloved.

Mrs Rack. So you won't trust to the good old maxim---"Marry first and love will follow?"

Let. As readily as I would venture my last guinea, that good fortune might follow The woman that has not touch'd the heart of a man before he leads her to the altar, has scarcely a chance to charm it when possession and security turn their powerful arms against her ---But here he comes ---I'll disappear for a moment --Don't spare me. [*exit Letitia.*

Enter Doricourt (not seeing Mrs Racket.

Doric. So (*looking at the picture*) this is my mistress, I presume ---*Ma foi!* the painter has hit her off ---The downcast eye---the blushing cheek---timid---apprehensive-- bashful A tear and a prayer-book would have made her *La Bella Magdalena.*

Give *me* a woman in whose touching mien
A mind, a soul, a polish'd art is seen;
Whose motion speaks, whose poignant air can move
Such are the darts to wound with endless love.

Mrs Rack. Is that an impromptu? (*touching him on the shoulder with her fan.*)

Doric. (*starting*) Madam! (*aside*) Finely caught! Not absolutely--it struck me during the dessert, as a motto for your picture

Mrs Rack. Gallantly turned! I perceive, however, Miss Hardy's charms have made no violent impression on you ---And who can wonder!---the poor girl's defects are so obvious

Doric. Defects?

Mrs. Rack. Merely those of education.---Her father's indulgence ruined her -- *Mauvaise honte*---conceit and ignorance---all unite in the lady you are to marry.

Doric. Marry!----I marry such a women!----Your picture, I hope, is overcharged.---I marry *mauvaise honte*, pertness and ignorance!

Mrs Rack. Thank your stars, that ugliness and ill temper are not added to the list.---You must think her handsome?

Doric. Half her personal beauty would content me; but could the Medicean Venus be animated for me, and endowed with a vulgar soul, *I* should become the statue, and my heart transformed to marble.

Mrs Rack. Bless us!----We are in a hopeful way then!

Doric. (*aside*) There must be some envy in this'---I see she is a coquette Ha, ha, ha! And you imagine I am persuaded of the truth of your character? ha, ha, ha! Miss Hardy, I have been assured, madam, is elegant and accomplished --------but one must allow for a lady's painting

Mrs. Rack. (*aside*) I'll be even with him for that, Ha, ha, ha! and so you have found me out!---Well, I protest I meant no harm; 'twas only to increase the *eclat* of her appearance that I threw a veil over her charms -------Here comes the lady;---her elegance and accomplishments will announce themselves.

Enter Letitia, running.

Let. La! cousin, do you know that our John---oh, dear heart!---I did'nt see you, sir, (*hanging down her head, and dropping behind Mrs Racket*)

Mrs Rack. Fie, Letitia! Mr Doric will think you

a woman of elegant manners. Stand forward, and confirm his opinion

Let. No, no, keep before me.——He's my sweetheart; and 'tis impudent to look one's sweetheart in the face, you know.

Mrs. Rack. You'll allow in future for a lady's painting, sir. Ha, ha, ha!

Doric. I am astonished!

Let. Well, hang it, I'll take heart. Why, he is but a man, you know, cousin; and I'll let him see I was'nt born in the wood to be scar'd by an owl. (*half apart; advances, and looks at him through her fingers.*) He, he, he. (*goes up to him, and makes a very stiff, formal courtsey; he bows.*)—You have been a great traveller, sir, I hear?

Doric. Yes, madam.

Let. Then I wish you'd tell us about the fine sights you saw when you went over sea. I have read in a book, that there are some countries where the men and women are all horses. Did you see any of them?

Mrs. Rack. Mr. Doricourt is not prepared my dear, for these inquiries, he is reflecting on the importance of the question, and will answer you——when he can.

Let. When he can! why, he's as slow in speech, as aunt Margery, when she's reading Thomas Aquinas; and stands gaping like mum-chance.

Mrs. Rack. Have a little discretion.

Let. Hold your tongue! Sure I may say what I please before I am married, if I can't afterwards.—D'ye think a body does not know how to talk to a sweetheart. He is not the first I have had.

Doric. Indeed!

Let. Oh, lud! he speaks! Why, if you must know——there was the curate at home when papa was a hunting, he used to come a suitoring, and make speeches to me out of books. Nobody knows what a *mort* of fine things he used to say to me; and call me Venus, and Juno, and Diana!

Doric. And pray lady how did you answer him?

Let Why, I used to say, look you, Mr Curate, don't think to come over me with your flim-flams; for a better man than ever trod in your shoes, is coming over sea to marry me; but, ifags! I begin to think I was out: Parson Dobbins was the sprightfuller man of the two.

Doric. Surely this cannot be Miss—

Let 'Laws! why don't you know me! You saw me to day—but I was daunted before my father, and the lawyer, and all of them, and did not care to speak out so, may be, you thought I couldn't; but I can talk as fast as any body, when I know folks a little: and now I have shown my parts, I hope you like me better

Enter Hardy.

Har. I foresee this won't do! Mr Doricourt, may be you take my daughter for a fool; but you are mistaken she's a sensible girl as any in England

Doric. I am convinced she has a very uncommon understanding, sir. (*aside*) I did not think he had been such an ass

Let. My father will undo the whole Laws! papa, how can you think he can take me for a fool! when every body knows I beat the potecary at conundrums last Christmas time? And didn't I make a string of names, all in riddles, for the Lady's Diary? There was a little river, and a great house, that was Newcastle. There was what a lamb says, and three letters; that was *ba*, and *k e-r*, ker, baker There was—

Har. Don't stand ba-a-ing there. You'll make me mad in a moment! I tell you, sir, that for all that, she's devilish sensible.

Doric. Sir, I give all possible credit to your assertions.

Let Laws! papa, do come along. If you stand

watching, how can my sweetheart break his mind, and tell me how he admires me?

Doric. That would be difficult, indeed, madam.

Her. I tell you, Letty, I'll have no more of this. ——I see well enough ——

Let. Laws! don't snub me before my husband—that is to be. You'll teach him to snub me too—and I believe, by his looks, he'd like to begin now. So, let us go, cousin, you may tell the gentleman what a genus I have—how I can cut watch papers and work catgut; make quadrille baskets with pins, and take profiles in shade—ay as well as the lady at No. 62, South Moulton Street, Grosvenor Square.

[*exit Hardy and Letitia.*

Mrs. Rack. What think you of my painting, now?

Doric. Oh, mere water colours, madam! The lady has only caricatured your picture.

Mrs. Rack. And how does she strike you on the whole?

Doric. Like a good design spoilt by the incapacity of the artist. Her faults are evidently the result of her father's weak indulgence. I observed an expression in her eye, that seems to satirise the folly of her lips.

Mrs. Rack. But at her age, when education is fixed, and manner becomes nature—hopes of improvement—

Doric. Would be as rational, as hopes of gold from a Juggler's crucible. Dorcourt's wife must be incapable of improvement; but it must be because she's got beyond it.

Mrs. Rack. I am pleased your misfortune sits no heavier.

Doric. Your pardon, madam, so mercurial was the hour in which I was born, that misfortunes always go plump to the bottom of my heart, like a pebble in water, and leave the surface unruffled. I shall certainly set off for Bath, or the other world, to night; but whether I shall use a chaise with four swift coursers, or go off

in a tangent—from the aperture of a pistol, deserves consideration; so I make my *adieus*. (*going*)

Mr Rack. Oh, but I entreat you, postpone your journey 'till to-morrow, determine on which you will—you must be this night at the masquerade.

Doric. Masquerade!

Mrs. Rack. Why not? If you resolve to visit the other world, you may as well take one night's pleasure first in this, you know.

Doric Faith, that's very true; ladies are the best philosophers, after all. Expect me at the masquerade. [*exit Doricourt*

Mrs Rack. He's a charming fellow! I think Letitia shan't have him. (*going*)

Enter Hardy.

Har What's he gone?

Mrs. Rack. Yes, and I am glad he is You would have ruined us! Now, I beg, Mr. Hardy, you won't interfere in this business; it is a little out of your way. [*exit Mrs Racket.*

Har. Hang me, if I don't though I foresee very clearly what will be the end of it, if I leave ye to yourselves, so I'll e'en follow him to the masquerade, and tell him all about it, let me see. What shall my dress be? A great mogul? No. A grenadier? No; no, that, I foresee would make a laugh. Hang me, if I don't send to my favourite little Quack, and borrow his Jew Isaac's dress I know the dog likes a glass of good wine; so I'll give him a bottle of my forty-eight, and he shall teach me. Aye, that's it—I'll be cunning little Isaac! If they complain of my want of wit, I'll tell 'em the cursed Duenna wears the breeches, and has spoilt my parts. [*exit Hardy*

SCENE II.—COURTALL'S.

Enter Courtall, Saville, and three others, from an apartment in the back scene—the last three tipsey.

Court You shan't go yet; another catch, and another bottle!

First Gent May I be a bottle, and an empty bottle, if you catch me at that! Why, I am going to the masquerade Jack——, you know who I mean, is to meet me, and we are to have a leap at the new lustres.

Second Gent. And I am going too—a Harlequin—(*hiccups*) Am not I in a pretty pickle to make Harlequinades? And Tony, here—he is going in the disguise—in the disguise—of a gentleman?

First Gent We are all very disguised; so bid them draw up---d'ye hear! [*exeunt the three Gentlemen.*

Sav Thy skull, Courtall, is a lady's thimble.---no, an egg shell.

Court. Nay, then you are gone too; you never aspire to similes, but in your cups

Sav. No, no I am steady enough---but the fumes of the wine pass directly through thy egg shell, and leave thy brain as cool as------Hey! I am quite sober; my similes fail me.

Court. Then we'll sit down here, and have one sober bottle --Bring a table and glasses.

Sav. I'll not swallow another drop, no, though the juice should be the true Falernian.

Court. By the bright eyes of her you love, you shall drink her health

Sav Ah! (*sitting*) Her I loved is gone (*sighing*)---she's married!

Court Then bless your stars you are not her husband! I would be husband to no woman in Europe, who was not devilish rich and devilish ugly

Sav Wherefore ugly?

Court. Because she could not have the conscience to

exact those attentions that a pretty wife expects; or, if she should, her resentments would be perfectly easy to me, nobody would undertake to revenge her cause.

Sav. Thou art a most licentious fellow!

Court. I should hate my own wife, that's certain, but I have a warm heart for those of other people; and so here's to the prettiest wife in England---Lady Frances Touchwood.

Sav. Lady Frances Touchwood! I rise to drink her (*drinks*) How the devil came Lady Frances in your head? I never knew you give a woman of chastity before

Court. That's odd, for you have heard me give half the women of fashion in England---But, pray now, what do you take a woman of chastity to be? (*sneeringly.*

Sav. Such a woman as Lady Frances Touchwood, Sir.

Court. Oh, you are grave, sir, I remember you was an adorer of her's---why didn't you marry her?

Sav. I had not the arrogance to look so high.---Had my fortune been worthy of her, she should not have been ignorant of my admiration

Court. Precious fellow! What, I suppose you would not dare tell her now that you admire her?

Sav. No, nor you

Court. By the Lord, I have told her so.

Sav. Have! impossible!

Court. Ha, ha, ha!—Is it so?

Sav. How did she receive the declaration?

Court. Why, in the old way; blushed, and frowned, and said she was married.

Sav. What amazing things thou art capable of! I could more easily have taken the Pope by the beard, than profaned her ears with such a declaration.

Court. I shall meet her at Lady Brilliant's to night, where I shall repeat it; and I'll lay my life, under a mask, she'll hear it all without a blush, or frown

Sav. (*risi*[illegible] 'Tis false, sir!—she won't.

Court. Sh[illegible]ll! (*rising*) Nay, I'd venture to lay a round sum [illegible] prevail on her to go out with me—— only to taste [illegible]e fresh air, I mean.

Sav. Preposterous vanity! from this moment I suspect that half the victories you have boasted, are false and slanderous, as your pretended influence with Lady Frances.

Court. 'Pretended'—How should such a fellow as you, now, who never soar'd beyond a cherry-cheeked daughter of a ploughman in Norfolk, judge of the influence of a man of my figure and habits? I could show thee a list, in which there are names to shake thy faith in the whole sex!—and to that list I have no doubt of adding the name of Lady ——.

Sav. Hold, sir! my ears cannot bear the profanation;—you cannot, dare not approach her!—For your soul you dare not mention love to her! Her look would freeze the word, whilst it hovered on thy licentious lips!

Court. Whu! whu! Well, we shall see—this evening, by Jupiter, the trial shall be made—if I fail—I fail.

Sav. I think thou darest not!—But my life, my honour on her purity. [*Exit Saville.*

Court. Hot headed fool! but since he has brought it to this point, by gad I'll try what can be done with her ladyship (*musing*)—(*rings*) She's frost work, and the prejudices of education yet strong *ergo*, passionate professions will only inflame her pride, and put her on her guard.—For other arts then.

Enter Dick

Dick, do you know any of the servants at Sir George Touchwood's?

Dick. Yes, sir; I knows the groom, and one of the house maids; for the matter o' that she's my own cousin; and it was my mother that holped her to the place.

Court. Do you know Lady Frances's maid?

Dick. I can't say as how I know she.

Court. Do you know Sir George's valet?

Dick. No, sir; but Sally is very thick with Mr Gibson, Sir George's gentleman.

Court. Then go there directly, and employ Sally to discover whether her master goes to Lady Brilliant's this evening; and, if he does, the name of the shop that sold his habit

Dick Yes sir

Court. Be exact in your intelligence, and come to me at Boodle's. (*exit Dick.*) If I cannot otherwise succeed, I'll beguile her as Jove did Alcumena, in the shape of her husband The possession of so fine a woman—the triumph over Saville, are each a sufficient motive, and united, they shall be resistless

Exit Courtall.

SCENE III.—THE STREET.

Enter Saville.

Sav. The air has recovered me! What have I been doing! Perhaps my petulance may be the cause of *her* ruin whose honour I asserted:—his vanity is piqued;—and where women are concerned, Courtall can be a villain.

Enter Dick. Bows and passes hastily.

He! that's his servant! —— Dick!

Dick. (*returning*) Sir.

Sav Where are you going, Dick?

Dick. Going! I am going, sir, where my master sent me

Sav. Well answered;—but I have a particular reason for my inquiry, and you must tell me.

Dick. Why then, sir, I am going to call upon a cousin of mine, that lives at Sir George Touchwood's.

Sav. Very well.—There, (*gives him money.*) you must make your cousin drink my health.—What are you going about?

Dick. Why, Sir, I believe 'tis no harm, or elseways I am sure I would not blab.—I am only going to ax if Sir George goes to the masquerade to-night, and what dress he wears.

Sav. Enough! Now, Dick, if you will call at my lodgings in your way back, and acquaint me with your cousin's intelligence, I'll double the trifle I have given you.

Dick. Bless your honour, I'll call——never fear.

[*exit Dick.*

Sav. Surely the occasion may justify the means:—'tis doubly my duty to be Lady Frances's protector. Courtall, I see, is planning an artful scheme; but Saville shall out-plot him. [*exit Saville.*

SCENE IV.—SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S.

Enter Sir George and Villers.

Vill. For shame, Sir George! you have left Lady Frances in tears. How can you afflict her?

Sir Geo. 'Tis I that am afflicted,—my dream of happiness is over. Lady Frances and I are disunited.

Vill. The devil! why, you have been in town but ten days: she can have made no acquaintance for a commons affair yet.

Sir Geo. Pho! 'tis our minds that are disunited: she no longer places her whole delight in me; she has yielded herself up to the world!

Vill. Yielded herself up to the world! Why did you not bring her to town in a cage? Then she might have taken a peep at the world! But, after all, what has the world done? A twelvemonth since you was the gayest fellow in it. If any body asked who dresses best? Sir George Touchwood. Who is the most gallant man? Sir George Touchwood. Who is the most wedded to

amusement and dissipation? Sir George Touchwood. And now Sir George is metamorphosed into a sour censor; and talks of fashionable life with as much bitterness, as the old crabbed fellow in Rome

Sir Geo. The moment I became possessed of such a jewel as lady Frances, every thing wore a different complexion; that society in which I liv'd with so much *éclat*, became the object of my terror, and I think of the manners of polite life, as I do of the atmosphere of a pest house. My wife is already infected; she was set upon this morning by maids, widows and bachelors, who carried her off in triumph, in spite of my displeasure.

Vill. Aye, to be sure; there would have been no triumph in the case, if you had not opposed it. but I have heard the whole story from Mrs Racket; and I assure you, Lady Frances did'nt enjoy the morning at all; she wished for you fifty times.

Sir Geo. Indeed! are you sure of that?

Vill. Perfectly sure.

Sir Geo. I wish I had known it:——my uneasiness at dinner was occasioned by very different ideas.

Vill. Here she comes, to receive your apology; but if she is true woman, her displeasure will rise in proportion to your contrition; and till you grow careless about her pardon, she won't grant it——however, I'll leave you. Matrimonial duets are seldom set in the style I like. [*exit Villers.*

Enter Lady Frances.

Sir Geo. The sweet sorrow that glitters in these eyes, I cannot bear (*embracing her*) Look cheerfully, you rogue

Lady Fran. I cannot look otherwise, if you are pleased with me

Sir. Geo. Well, Fanny, to day you made your *entrée* in the fashionable world; tell me honestly the impressions you received.

Lady Fran. Indeed, Sir George, I was so hurried

from place to place, that I had not time to find out what my impressions were.

Sir Geo. That's the very spirit of the life you have chosen

Lady Fran. Every body about me seemed happy---- but every body seemed in a hurry to be happy somewhere else

Sir Geo. And you like this?

Lady Fran. One must like what the rest of the world likes.

Sir Geo Pernicious maxim.

Lady Fran But, my dear Sir George, you have not promised to go with me to the masquerade.

Sir Geo 'Twould be a shocking indecorum to be seen together, you know.

Lady Fran. Oh, no; I asked Mrs. Racket, and she told me we might be seen together at the masquerade --without being laughed at.

Sir Geo. Really?

Lady Fran. Indeed, to tell you the truth, I could wish it was the fashion for married people to be inseparable; for I have more heartfelt satisfaction in fifteen minutes with you at my side, than fifteen days amusement could give without you.

Sir. Geo My sweet creature! how that confession charms me!---Let us begin the fashion

Lady Fran O, impossible! we should not gain a single proselyte; and you can't conceive what spiteful things would be said of us. At Kensington to day a lady met us, whom we saw at Court, when we were presented; she lifted up her hands in amazement!--- Bless me! said she to her companion, here's Lady Frances without Sir Hurlo Thumbo!---My dear Mrs. Racket, consider what an important charge you have! for heaven's sake take her home again, or some enchanter on a flying dragon will descend and carry her off. Oh, said another, I dare say Lady Frances has a clue to her heel, like the peerless Rosamond. Her tender

swain would never have trusted her so far without such a precaution.

Sir Geo. Heaven and earth!—How shall innocence preserve its lustre amidst manners so corrupt!—My dear Fanny, I feel a sentiment for thee at this moment tenderer than love—more animated than passion!—I could weep over that purity, exposed to the sullying breath of fashion and the *Town*, in whose latitudinary vortex Chastity herself can scarcely move unspotted.

Enter Gibson

Gib. Your honour talk'd I thought, something about going to the masquerade?

Sir Geo. Well.

Gib. Isn't it?—hasn't your honour? I thought your honour had forgotten to order a dress

Lady Fran. Well considered, Gibson. Come, will you be Jew, Turk, or Heretic, a Chinese Emperor, or a ballad-singer; a rake or a watchman?

Sir Geo. Oh, neither my love; I can't take the trouble to support a character

Lady Fran. You'll wear a domino then: I saw a pink domino trimm'd with blue at the shop where I bought my habit. Would you like it?

Sir Geo. Any thing, any thing

Lady Fran. Then go about it directly Gibson!—A pink domino trimm'd with blue, and a hat of the same.—Come, you have not seen my dress yet—it is most beautiful; I long to have it on

Exeunt Sir George and Lady Frances

Gib. A pink domino trimm'd with blue, and a hat of the same——What the *dev*il can it signify to Sally now what his dress is to be? surely the slut has not made an assignation to meet her master!

[*Exit Gibson*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—A MASQUERADE.

A party dancing Cotillions in front---a variety of characters pass and repass. Enter Folly on a hobby horse with cap and bells.

Mask. Hey! Tom Fool! What business have you here?

Fol What, sir! affront a prince in his own dominion! [*struts off.*

Mountebank Who'll buy my nostrums? Who'll buy my nostrums?

Mask What are they? [*they all come round him.*

Mount Different sorts, and for different customers. Here's a liquor for ladies—it expels the rage of gaming and gallantry Here's a pill for members of parliament—good to settle consciences Here's an eye water for jealous husbands---it thickens the visual membrane, through which they see too clearly. Here's a decoction for the clergy---it never sits easy, if the patient has more than one living Here's a draught for lawyers---a great promoter of modesty. Here's a powder for projectors----'twill rectify the fumes of an empty stomach, and dissipate their airy castles

Mask Have you a nostrum that can give patience to young heirs, whose uncles and fathers are stout and healthy?

Mount Yes, and I have an infusion for creditors---it gives resignation and humility, when fine gentlemen break their promises, or plead their privilege.

Mask. Come along;—I'll find you customers for your whole cargo.

Enter Hardy, in the dress of Isaac Mendoza.

Har. Why, isn't it a shame to see so many stout, well built young fellows, masquerading, and cutting *Courantas* here at home—instead of making the French cut capers to the tune of your cannon;—or sweating the Spaniards with an English *fandango?*—I foresee the end of this.

Mask. Why, thou little testy Israelite! back to Duke's place; and preach your tribe into a subscription for the good of the land on whose milk and honey ye fatten. Where are your Joshuas and you Gideons, aye? What! all dwindled into stock brokers, pedlars, and rag men?

Har. No, not all. Some of us turn Christians, and by degrees grow into all the privileges of Englishmen! In the second generation we are patriots, rebels, courtiers, and husbands.

[*puts his fingers to his forehead.*

Two other Masks advance.

3*d Mask.* What, my little Isaac!—how the devil came you here?—where's your old Margaret?

Har. Oh, I have got rid of her.

3*d Mask.* How?

Har. Why, I persuaded a young Irishman that she was a blooming plump beauty of eighteen; so they made an elopement, ha, ha, ha! and she is now the toast of Tipperary. Ha! there's cousin Racket and her party; they shan't know me. [*puts on his mask.*

Enter Mrs. Racket, Lady Frances, Sir George, and Flutter.

Mrs. Rack. Look at this dumpling Jew; he must be a Levite by his figure. You have surely practised the flesh a long time, friend, to have raised that goodly presence.

Har. About as long, my brisk widow as you have been angling for a second husband, but my hook has

been better baited than yours---you have only caught gudgeons, I see. [*pointing to Flutter.*

Flut. Oh, this is one of the geniuses they hire to entertain the company with their *accidental* sallies.---Let me look at your common place book, friend.--I want a few good things.

Har. I'd oblige you, with all my heart, but you'll spoil them in repeating- or, if you should not, they'll gain you no reputation---for nobody will believe they are your own.

Sir. Geo. He knows ye, Flutter, the little gentleman fancies himself a wit, I see.

Har. There's no depending on what *you* see—the eyes of the jealous are not to be trusted. Look to your lady.

Flut. He knows ye, Sir George.

Sir Geo. What! am I the town talk? [*aside.*

Har. I can neither see Doricourt nor Letty. I must find them out. [*exit Hardy.*

Mrs. Rack. Well, Lady Frances, is not all this charming? Could you have conceived such a brilliant assemblage of objects?

Lady Fran. Delightful! the days of enchantment are restored; the columns glow with sapphires and rubies. Emperors and fairies, beauties and dwarfs meet me at every step.

Sir Geo. How lively are first impressions on sensible minds! In four hours, vapidity and languor will take place of that exquisite sense of joy, which flutters your little heart.

Mrs. Rack. What an inhuman creature! Fate has not allowed us these sensations above ten times in our lives; and would you have us shorten them by anticipation?

Flut. O Lord! your wise men are the greatest fools upon earth---they reason about their enjoyments, and analyze their pleasures, whilst the essence escapes. Look, Lady Frances, d'ye see that figure strutting in

the dress of an emperor? His father retails oranges in Botolph lane. That gypsey is a maid of honour, and that rag man a physician.

Lady Fran. Why, you know every body.

Flut. Oh, every creature—A mask is nothing at all to me—I can give you the history of half the people here. In the next apartment there's a whole family, who, to my knowledge, have lived on water cresses this month, to make a figure here to-night;—but, to make up for that, they'll cram their pockets with cold ducks and chickens, for a carnival to-morrow.

Lady Fran. Oh, I should like to see this provident family.

Flut. Honour me with your arm.

[*exeunt Flutter and Lady Frances.*

Mrs. Rack. Come, Sir George, you shall be *my* beau.—We'll make the tour of the rooms, and meet them. Oh! your pardon, you must follow Lady Frances; or the wits and fine parts of Mr Flutter may drive you out of her head. Ha, ha, ha!

[*exit Mrs Rack.*

Sir Geo. I was going to follow her, and now I dare not. How can I be such a fool as to be governed by the *fear* of that ridicule which I despise!

[*exit Sir George.*

Enter Dorncourt, meeting a mask.

Dorn. Ha! my Lord!—I thought you had been engaged at Westminster on this important night.

Mask. So I am—I slipt out as soon as Lord Trope got upon his legs: I can *badiner* here an hour or two, and be back again before he is down——There's a fine figure! I'll address her.

Enter Letitia.

Charity, fair lady! Charity for a poor pilgrim.

Let. Charity! if you mean my prayers, heaven grant thee wit, pilgrim.

Mask. That blessing would do from a devoter,

from you I ask other charities;—such charities as beauty should bestow—soft looks—sweet words—and kind wishes

Let. Alas! I am bankrupt of these, and forced to turn beggar myself.——There he is!—how shall I catch his attention? [*aside.*

Mask. Will you grant me no favour?

Let. Yes, one—I'll make you my partner—not for life, but through the soft mazes of a minuet.—Do you dance?

Doric. Some spirit in that.

Mask. I dare do any thing you command.

Doric. Do you know her my Lord?

Mask. No such a woman as that, would formerly have been known in any disguise, but beauty is now common—Venus seems to have given her *Cestus* to the whole sex.

A MINUET

Doric. (*during the minuet*) She dances divinely (*when ended*) Somebody must know her! Let us inquire who she is. [*exit*

Enter Saville and Kitty Willis, habited like Lady Frances

Sav. I have seen Courtall in Sir George's habit, though he endeavoured to keep himself concealed Go, and seat yourself in the tea room, and on no account discover your face—remember too, Kitty, that the woman you are to personate is a woman of virtue

Kit. I am afraid I shall find that a difficult character: indeed I believe it is seldom kept up through a whole masquerade.

Sav. Of that *you* can be no judge——Follow my directions, and you shall be rewarded! [*exit Kitty*

Enter Doricourt

Doric. Ha! Saville! did you see a lady dance just now?

Sav. No

Doric. Very odd. Nobody knows her

Sav. Where is Miss Hardy?

Doric Cutting watch papers, and making conundrums, I suppose.

Sav What do you mean?

Doric Faith, I hardly know. She's not here, however, Mrs. Racket tells me - I asked no further.

Sav. Your indifference seems increased.

Doric. Quite the reverse; 'tis advanced thirty-two degrees towards hatred.

Sav You are jesting?

Doric Then it must be with a very ill grace, my dear Saville for I never felt so seriously: do you know the creature is almost an ideot?

Sav. What!

Doric. An ideot What the devil shall I do with her? Egad! I think I'll feign myself mad---and then Hardy will propose to cancel the engagements

Sav An excellent expedient I must leave you; you are mysterious, and I can't stay to unravel ye.--I came here to watch over innocence and beauty.

Doric The guardian of innocence and beauty at three and twenty! Is there not a cloven foot under that black gown, Saville?

Sav. No, faith Courtall is here on a most detestable design —I found means to get a knowledge of the lady's dress, and have brought a girl to personate her, whose reputation cannot be hurt —You shall know the result to-morrow. Adieu *[exit Saville.*

Doric (musing) Yes, I think that will do—I'll feign myself mad, fee the doctor to pronounce me incurable, and when the parchments are destroyed --

As he stands in a musing posture, Letitia enters, and sings

SONG.

Wake! thou son of dullness, wake!
From thy drowsy senses shake

All the spells that care employ,
Cheating mortals of their joys

Light winged spirits, hither haste!
Who prepare for mortal taste
All the gifts that pleasure sends,
Every bliss that youth attends

Touch his feelings, rouse his soul,
Whilst the sparkling moments roll;
Bid them wake to new delight,
Crown the magic of the night.

Doric. By heaven, the same sweet creature.

Let. You have chosen an odd situation for study. Fashion and taste preside in this spot;—they throw their spells around you;—ten thousand delights spring up at their command,—and you, a Stoic—a being without senses, are wrapt in reflection.

Doric. And you, the most charming being in the world, awake me to admiration. Did you come from the stars?

Let. Yes, and I shall reascend in a moment.

Doric. Pray show me your face before you go.

Let. Beware of imprudent curiosity; it lost paradise.

Doric. Eve's curiosity was raised by the devil;—'t is an angel tempts mine—So your allusion is not in point.

Let. But *why* would you see my face!

Doric. To fall in love with it.

Let. And what then?

Doric. Why, then—aye, curse it! there's the rub. [*aside*

Let. Your mistress will be angry;—but, perhaps you have no mistress?

Doric. Yes, yes; and a sweet one it is!

Let. What! is she old?

Doric. No.

Let Ugly.

Doric. No

Let What then

Doric Pho! don't talk about *her*; but show me your face.

Let My vanity forbids it,---'twould frighten you

Doric. Impossible! your shape is graceful, your air bewitching, your bosom transparent, and your chin would tempt me to kiss it, if I did not see a pouting red lip above it that demands -------

Let You grow too free

Doric Show me your face then-- only half a glance

Let Not for worlds

Doric. What! you will have a little gentle force? [*attempts to seize her mask*

Let I am gone for ever! [*exit.*

Doric 'Tis false,---I'll follow to the end. [*exit*

Flutter, Lady Frances, and Saville advance

Lady Fran. How can you be thus interested for a stranger?

Sav Goodness will ever interest, its home is heaven: on earth 'tis but a wanderer Imprudent lady! why have you left the side of your protector Where is your husband?

Flut Why, what's that to him?

Lady Fran. Surely it can't be merely his habit,---there's something in him that awes me

Flut, Pho! 'tis only his grey beard ----I know him; he keeps a lottery office on Cornhill

Sav My province as an enchanter, lays open every secret to me. Lady! there are dangers abroad---beware! [*exit.*

Lady Fran 'Tis very odd. his manner has made me tremble. Let us seek Sir George.

Flut. He is coming towards us.

Courtall comes forward, habited like Sir George.

Court. There she is! If I can but disengage her

from that fool, Flutter---crown me, ye schemers, with immortal wreaths

Lady Fran O my dear Sir George! I rejoice to meet you --an old conjuror has been frightening me with his prophecies -- Where's Mrs Racket?

Court In the dancing room — I promised to send you to her, Mr Flutter

Flut. Ah! she wants me to dance. With all my heart [*exit*

Lady Fran Why do you keep on your mask?-- 'tis too warm.

Court. 'Tis very warm-- I want air – let us go.

Lady Fran You seem quite agitated.-- Sha'n't we bid our company adieu?

Court. No, no;--there's no time for forms. I'll just give directions to the carriage, and be with you in a moment. (*going, stops back*) Put on your mask; I have a particular reason for it. [*exit.*

Saville advances with Kitty.

Sav Now, kitty, you know your lesson. Lady Frances, (*takes off his mask*) let me lead you to your husband.

Lady Fran Heavens! is Mr Saville the conjuror? Sir George is just stept to the door to give directions. –We are going home immediately

Sav No, madam, you are deceived· Sir George is this way

Lady Fran This is astonishing!

Sav. Be not alarmed, you have escaped a snare, and shall be in safety in a moment.

[*Exit Saville and Lady Frances*

Enter Courtall and seizes Kitty's hand.

Court Now!

Kit 'Tis pity to go so soon.

Court Perhaps I may bring you back, my angel-- but go now, you must (*exit*) [*music*

Dorincourt and Letitia come forward

Dori. 'Bo heavens! I was charmed 'till now,

—English beauty—French vivacity—wit—elegance. Your name, my angel!—tell me your name, though you persist in concealing your face.

Let. My name has a spell in it.

Doric. I thought so, it must be *Charming*.

Let. But if revealed, the charm is broke.

Doric. I'll answer for its force.

Let. Suppose it Harriet, or Charlotte, or Maria, or—

Doric. Hang Harriet, and Charlotte, and Maria—the name your father gave ye!

Let. That can't be worth knowing, 'tis so transient a thing.

Doric. How, transient?

Let. Heaven forbid my name should be *lasting* till I am married.

Doric. Married! the chains of matrimony are too heavy and vulgar for such a spirit as yours.——The flowery wreaths of Cupid are the only bands you should wear.

Let. They are the lightest, I believe, but 'tis possible to wear those of marriage gracefully.——Throw 'em loosely round, and twist 'em in a true lover's knot for the bosom.

Doric. An angel! But what will you be when a wife?

Let. A woman—If my husband should prove a churl, a fool, or a tyrant, I'd break his heart, ruin his fortune, elope with the first pretty fellow that asked me—and return the contempt of the world with scorn, whilst my feelings preyed upon my life.

Doric. Amazing! (*aside*) What if you lov'd him, and he were worthy of your love?

Let. Why, then I'd be any thing—and all!—Grave, gay, capricious—the soul of whim, the spirit of variety—live with him in the eye of fashion, or in the shade of retirement—change my country, my sex—feast with him in an Esquimaux hut, or a Persian pa[illegible]—join him in the victorious war dance on the

borders of lake Ontario, or sleep to the soft breathings of the flute in the cinnamon groves of Ceylon---dig with him in the mines of Golconda, or enter the dangerous precincts of the Mogul's seraglio---cheat him of his wishes, and overturn his empire to restore the husband of my heart to the blessings of liberty and love.

Doric. Delightful wildness! Oh, to catch thee, and hold thee for ever in this little cage!

[*attempting to clasp her.*

Let. Hold, sir! though Cupid must give the bait that tempts me to the snare, 'tis Hymen must spread the net to catch me.

Doric. 'Tis in vain to assume airs of coldness——— Fate has ordained you mine.

Let. How do you know?

Doric. I feel it *here* I never met with a woman so perfectly to my taste, and I won't believe it formed you so on purpose to tantalize me.

Let. This moment is worth a whole existence

[*aside.*

Doric. Come, show me your face, and rivet my chains.

Let. To-morrow you shall be satisfied.

Doric. To-morrow! and not to-night?

Let. No

Doric. Where then shall I wait on you to-morrow? ——Where see you?

Let. You shall see me in an hour when you least expect me.

Doric. Why all this mystery?

Let. I like to be mysterious. At present be content to know that I am a woman of family and fortune. Adieu!

Enter Hardy.

Har. Adieu! then I am come at the fag end. [*aside*

Doric. Let me see you to your carriage

Let As you value knowing me, stir not a step. If I am followed, you never see me more. [*exit.*

Doric Barbarous creature! She's gone! What, and is this really serious?—am I in love?——Pho! it can't be——O Flutter! do you know that charming creature?

Enter Flutter.

Flut What charming creature? I passed a thousand?

Doric She went out at that door as you entered

Flut Oh yes;—I know her very well

Doric Do you my dear fellow? Who?

Flut She's kept by Lord George Jennett.

Har Impudent scoundrel? [*aside.*

Doric Kept!!!

Flut Yes, colonel Gorget had her first;—then Mr. Lovevill;—then—I forget exactly how many, and at last she's Lord George's [*talks to other Masks.*

Doric I'll murder Gorget, poison Lord George, and shoot myself

Har Now's the time, I see, to clear up the whole. Mr Doricourt!—I say—Flutter was mistaken; I know who you are in love with

Doric A strange *rencontre!* Who?

Har. My Letty.

Doric Oh! I understand your rebuke; 'tis too soon, sir, to assume the father-in-law.

Har Zounds! what do you mean by that? I tell you that the lady you admire, is Letitia Hardy.

Doric I am glad *you* are so well satisfied with the state of my heart—I wish *I* was [*exit.*

Har Stop a moment—stop I say? What you won't? Very well—if I don't play you a trick for this, may I never be a grandfather! I'll plot *with* Letty now, and not against her, aye, hang me if I dont. There's something in my head, that shall tingle in his heart.—He shall have a lecture upon impatience, that I foresee will be the better for as long as he lives [*exit.*

Saville comes forward with other Masks.

Sav Flutter, come with us; we're going to raise a laugh at Courtall's.

Flut. With all my heart. "Live to live," was my father's motto; "live to laugh," is mine. [*exit.*

SCENE II.—COURTALL'S.

Enter Kitty and Courtall.

Kit. Where have you brought me, Sir George? This is not our home

Court. 'Tis my home, beautiful Lady Frances! (*kneels and takes off his mask*) Oh, forgive the ardency of my passion, which has compelled me to deceive you.

Kit. Mr Courtall! what will become of me?

Court Oh, say but that you pardon the wretch who adores you Did you but know the agonizing tortures of my heart, since I had the felicity of conversing with you this morning——or the despair that now—[*knock.*

Kit Oh! I'm undone!

Court. Zounds! my dear Lady Frances. I am not at home. Rascal! do you hear?—Let nobody in; I am not at home.

Serv. (*without*) Sir, I told the gentlemen so.

Court. Eternal curses! they are coming up. Step into this room, adorable creature; one moment; I'll throw them out of the window if they stay there.

[*exit Kitty, through the back scene.*

Enter Saville, Flutter, and Masks

Flut. O Gemini! beg the petticoat's pardon—Just saw a corner of it.

1*st Mask* No wonder admittance was so difficult: I thought you took us for bailiffs.

Court. Upon my soul, I am devilish glad to see you—but you perceive how I am circumstanced. Excuse me at this moment.

2d Mask. Tell us who 'tis then.

Court. Oh, fie!

Flut. We won't blab.

Court. I can't upon my honour.---Thus far---she's a woman of the first character and rank. Saville, (*takes him aside*) have I influence, or have I not?

Sav. Why, sure, you do not insinuate---

Court. No, not insinuate, but swear, that she's now in my bed-chamber; by gad, I don't deceive you.---There's generalship, you rogue! Such an humble, distant, sighing fellow as thou art, at the end of a six month's siege, would have boasted of a kiss from her glove.------I only give the signal, and---pop!---she's in my arms.

Sav. What, Lady Fran-- ---

Court. Hush! you shall see her name to-morrow morning in red letters at the end of my list. Gentlemen, you must excuse me now. Come and drink chocolate at twelve, but---

Sav. Aye, let us go, out of respect to the Lady:--'tis a person of rank.

Flut. Is it?---Then I'll have a peep at her.

[*runs to the door in the back scene.*

Court This is too much, sir. [*trying to prevent him.*

1st Mask By Jupiter, we'll all have a peep.

Court. Gentlemen, consider--for heaven's sake---a lady of quality. What will be the consequences?

Flut. The consequences!---Why you'll have your throat cut, that's all---but I'll write your elegy. So, now for the door! (*part open the door, whilst the rest hold Courtall*)---Beg your ladyship's pardon, whoever you are: (*leads her out*) emerge from darkness like the glorious sun, and bless the wondering circle with your charms. [*takes off her mask.*

Sav. Kitty Willis! ha, ha, ha!

Omnes. Kitty Willis! ha, ha, ha! Kitty Willis!

1st Mask. Why, what a fellow you are, Courtall, to attempt imposing upon your friends in this manner!

A lady of quality---an earl's daughter---your ladyship's most obedient.------Ha, ha, ha!

Sav. Courtall, have you influence, or have you not?

Flut The man's moon struck.

Court. Hell, and ten thousand furies, seize you all together!

Kit What! me too, Mr. Courtall? me, whom you have knelt to, prayed to, and adored?

Flut That's right, Kitty, give him a little more.

Court Disappointed and laughed at!------

Sav. Laughed at and despised. I have fulfilled my design, which was to expose your villany, and laugh at your presumption. Adieu, sir! Remember how you again boast of your influence with women of rank; and, when you next want amusement, dare not to look up to the virtuous and to the noble for a companion.

[*Exit, leading Kitty.*

Flut And Courtall, before you carry a lady into your bed chamber again, look under her mask, d'ye hear?

Court There's no bearing this! I'll set off for Paris directly. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

HARDY'S.

Enter Hardy and Villers.

Vill Whimsical enough! Dying for her, and hates her; believes her a fool, and a woman of brilliant understanding!

Har. As true as you are alive;---but when I went up to him last night, at the pantheon, out of downright good nature to explain things------my gentleman whips round upon his heel, and snapt me as short as if I had been a beggar woman with six children, and he overseer of the parish

Vill. Here comes the wonder worker—

Enter Letitia.

Here comes the enchantress, who can go to masquerades, and sing and dance, and talk a man out of his wits!—But pray, have we morning masquerades!

Let. Oh, no---but I am so enamoured of this all conquering habit, that I could not resist putting it on the moment I had breakfasted I shall wear it on the day I am married, and then lay it by in spices---like the miraculous robes of St. Bridget.

Vill. That's as most brides do The charms that helped to catch the husband are generally laid by, one after another, till the lady grows a downright wife, and then runs crying, to her mother, because she has transformed her lover into a downright husband.

Har. Listen to me---I ha'nt slept to night, for thinking of plots to plague Doricourt .- -and they drove one another out of my head so quick, that I was as giddy as a goose and could make nothing of 'em --I wish to goodness you could contrive something

Vill. Contrive to plague him! Nothing so easy. Don't undeceive him, madam, 'till he is your husband. Marry him whilst he possesses the sentiments you laboured to give him of Miss Hardy---and when you are his wife------

Let. Oh, heavens! I see the whole-- that's the very thing My dear Mr Villers, you are the divinest man.

Vill. Don't make love to me, hussy.

Enter Mrs. Racket

Mrs. Rack. No, pray don't---for I design to have Villers myself in about six years,---There's an oddity

in him that pleases me---He holds women in contempt, and I should like to have an opportunity of breaking his heart for that.

Vill. And when I am heartily tired of life, I know no woman whom I would with more pleasure make my executioner.

Har. It cannot be------I foresee it will be impossible to bring it about. You know the wedding was'nt to take place this week or more---and Letty will never be able to play the fool so long

Vill The knot shall be tied to night ------I have it all here (*pointing to his forehead*) the license is ready. Feign yourself ill, send for Doricourt, and tell him you can't go out of the world in peace, except you see the ceremony performed.

Har. I feign myself ill! I could as soon feign myself a Roman ambassador.---I was never ill in my life, but with the tooth-ache-- when Letty's mother was a breeding I had all the qualms.

Vill Oh, I have no fears for you ---But what says Miss Hardy? Are you willing to make the irrevocable vow before night?

Let. Oh, heavens!---I --I---'Tis so exceeding sudden, that really-----

Mrs Rack. That really she is frightened out of her wits---lest it should be impossible to bring matters about But I have taken the scheme into my protection, and you shall be Mrs. Doricourt before night. Come, (*to Mr. Hardy*) to bed directly. your room shall be crammed with phials, and all the apparatus of death:------then high presto! for Doricourt

Vill You go and put off your conquering dress, (*to Letitia*) and get all your awkward airs ready.---And you practise a few groans (*to Hardy*)---And you---if possible---an air of gravity (*to Mrs. Racket*) I'll answer for the plot.

Let. Married in jest! 'Tis an odd idea! Well, I'll venture!

[*Exit, Let, and Mrs. Rack.*

Vill. Aye, I'll be sworn! (*looks at his watch*) 'tis past three. The Budget is to be opened this morning. I'll just step down to the house---Will you go?

Har. What! with a mortal sickness?

Vill. What a blockhead! I believe, if half of us were to stay away with mortal sickness, it would be for the health of the nation. Good morning.---I'll call and feel your pulse as I come back. [*exit.*

Har. You won't find 'em over brisk, I fancy. I foresee some ill happening from this making believe to die before one's time. But hang it---a hem!---I am a stout man yet. only fifty six---what's that? In the last yearly bill there were three lived to above an hundred. Fifty six!---Fiddle-de-dee! I am not afraid, not I. [*exit.*

SCENE II.----DORICOURT'S---DORICOURT IN HIS ROBE-DE-CHAMBRE.

Enter Saville

Sav. Undressed so late?

Doric. I didn't go to bed till late---twas late before I slept---late when I rose. Do you know Lord George Jennet?

Sav. Yes.

Doric. Has he a mistress?

Sav. Yes.

Doric. What sort of a creature is she?

Sav. Why, she spends him three thousand a year with the ease of a Dutchess, and entertains his friends with the grace of a *Ninon*. *Ergo*, she is handsome, spirited and clever. (*Doricourt walks about disordered*) In the name of caprice, what ails you?

Doric. You have hit it---*elle est mon caprice*---The mistress of Lord George Jennet is my caprice---Oh, insufferable!

Sav What, you saw her at the masquerade?

Doric *Saw* her, *loved* her, *died* for her---without knowing her---And now the curse is, I can't hate her.

Sav. Ridiculous enough! All this distress about a kept woman, whom any man may have, I dare swear, in a fortnight---they've been jarring some time.

Doric. Have her! The sentiment I have conceived for the witch is so unaccountable, that, in that line, I cannot bear her idea Was she a woman of honour, for a wife I could adore her—but, I really believe, if she should send me an assignation, I should hate her.

Sav Hey day! this sounds like love What becomes of poor Miss Hardy?

Doric Her name has given me an ague. Dear Saville, how shall I contrive to make old Hardy cancel the engagement! The moiety of the estate which he will forfeit, shall be his the next moment, by deed of gift.

Sav. Let me see—can't you get it insinuated that you are a devilish wild fellow; that you are an infidel, and attached to wenching, gaming, and so forth?

Doric. Aye, such a character might have done some good two centuries back —But who the devil can it frighten now? I believe it must be the mad scheme at last.—There, will that do for the grin?

Sav. Ridiculous!—But, how are you certain that the woman who has so bewildered you, belongs to Lord George?

Doric. Flutter told me so.

Sav. Then fifty to one against the intelligence.

Doric. It must be so. There was a mystery in her manner, for which nothing else can account. (*a violent rap*) Who can this be? [*Saville looks out*,

Sav. The proverb is your answer—'tis Flutter himself. Tip him a scene of the madman, and see how it takes.

Doric. I will—a good way to send it about town. Shall it be of the melancholy kind, or the raving?

Sav. Rant!—rant!—here he comes!

Doric. Talk not to me who can pull comets by the beard, and overset an island.

Enter Flutter.

There! this is he!—this is he who hath sent my poor soul, without coat or breeches, to be tossed about in ether like a duck feather! Villain, give me my soul again!

Flut. Upon my soul I hav'n't got it [*exceedingly frightened.*

Sav. Oh, Mr. Flutter, what a melancholy sight!—I little thought to have seen my poor friend reduced to this.

Flut. Mercy defend me! What's he mad?

Sav. You see how it is. A cursed Italian lady—Jealousy—gave him a drug; and every full of the moon—

Doric Moon! who dares talk of the moon? The patroness of genius----the rectifier of wits----the---- Oh! here she is!---I feel her---she tugs at my bram---she has it---she has it---Oh! [*exit.*

Flut Well! this is dreadful! exceeding dreadful, I protest. Have you had Munro?

Sav. Not yet. The worthy Miss Hardy---what a misfortune!

Flut. Aye, very true.---Do they know it?

Sav. Oh, no; the paroxysm seized him but this morning.

Flut. Adieu! I can't stay. [*going in great haste.*

Sav. But you must. (*holding him*) Stay, and assist me; perhaps he'll return again in a moment; and, when he is in this way, his strength is prodigious.

Flut. Can't indeed---can't upon my soul

Sav. Flutter----Don't make a mistake, now;---remember 'tis Doricourt that's mad.

Flut. Yes---you mad.

Sav. No, no; Doricourt.

Flut. Egad, I'll say you are both mad, and then I can't mistake [*exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.---SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S.

Enter Sir George and Lady Frances.

Sir Geo. The bird is escaped---Courtall is gone to France.

Lady Fran. Heaven and earth! Have ye been to seek him?

Sir Geo. Seek him! aye.

Lady Fran. How did you get his name? I should never have told it you.

Sir Geo. I learnt it at the first coffee house I entered ---Every body is full of the story.

Lady Fran. Thank heaven! he's gone!---But I have a story for you --the Hardy family are forming a plot upon your friend Doricourt, and we are expected in the evening to assist.

Sir Geo. With all my heart, my angel; but I can't stay to hear it unfolded. They told me Mr. Saville would be at home in half an hour, and I am impatient to see him. The adventure of last night----

Lady Fran. Think of it only with gratitude. The danger I was in has overset a new system of conduct, that, perhaps, I was too much inclined to adopt. But henceforward, my dear Sir George, you shall be my constant companion and protector. And, when they ridicule the unfashionable monsters, the felicity of our hearts shall make them satire pointless.

Sir Geo. Charming angel! you almost reconcile me to Courtall. Hark! here's company. (*stepping to the door*) 'Tis your lively widow---I'll step down the back stairs to escape her. [*exit Sir George.*

Enter Mrs. Racket.

Mrs Rack. Oh, Lady Frances! I am shocked to death ---Have you received a card from us?

Lady Fran. Yes; within these twenty minutes.

Mrs. Rack. Aye, 'tis of no consequence.——'Tis all over—Doricourt is mad.

Lady Fran. Mad!

Mrs Rack My poor Letitia!—Just as we were enjoying ourselves with the prospect of a scheme that was planned for their mutual happiness, in came Flutter, breathless, with the intelligence:—I flew here to know if you had heard it

Lady Fran. No, indeed—and I hope it is one of Mr. Flutter's dreams

Enter Saville.

A-propos, now we shall be informed Mr. Saville, I rejoice to see you, though Sir George will be disappointed, he's gone to your lodgings

Sav. I should have been happy to have prevented Sir George. I hope your ladyship's adventure last night did not disturb your dreams?

Lady Fran Not at all, for I never slept a moment. My escape, and the importance of my obligation to you, employed my thoughts. But we have just had shocking intelligence --is it true that Doricourt is mad?

Sav. So; the business is done. (*aside*) Madam, I am sorry to say, that I have just been a melancholy witness of his ravings, he was in the height of a paroxysm.

Mrs. Rack. Oh, there can be no doubt of it. Flutter told us the whole history Some Italian princess gave him a drug in a box of sweetmeats, sent to him by her own page, and it renders him lunatic every month Poor Miss Hardy! I never felt so much on any occasion in my life.

Sav. To soften your concern, I will inform you, madam, that Miss Hardy is less to be pitied than you imagine

Mrs Rack. Why so, sir?

Sav. 'Tis rather a delicate subject---but he did not love Miss Hardy.

Mrs. Rack. He did love Miss Hardy, sir, and would have been the happiest of men

Sav Pardon me, madam; his heart was not only free from that lady's chains, but absolutely captivated by another

Mrs. Rack No, sir---no. It was Miss Hardy who captivated him. She met him last night at the masquerade, and charmed him in disguise---He professed the most violent passion for her; and a plan was laid, this evening, to cheat him into happiness.

Sav Ha, ha, ha!---Upon my soul, I must beg your pardon, I have not eaten of the Italian princess's box of sweetmeats, sent by her own page; and yet I am as mad as Doricourt, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Rack So it appears---what can all this mean?

Sav Why, madam, he is at present in his perfect senses, but he'll lose 'em in ten minutes, through joy. The madness was only a feint, to avoid marrying Miss Hardy, ha, ha, ha!—I'll carry him the intelligence directly [*going*

Mrs. Rack. Not for worlds I owe him revenge, now, for what he has made us suffer You must promise not to divulge a syllable I have told you, and when Doricourt is summoned to Mr. Hardy's, prevail on him to come---madness, and all

Lady Fran Pray do I should like to see him showing off, now I am in the secret

Sav You must be obeyed; though 'tis inhuman to conceal his happiness.

Mrs Rack. I am going home, so I'll set you down at his lodgings, and acquaint you, by the way, with our whole scheme. *Allons!*

Sav I attend you. [*leading her out.*

Mrs. Rack You won't fail us?

[*exit Saville and Mrs. Racket.*

Lady Fran. No: depend on us [*exit*

SCENE IV.—DORICOURT'S

Doricourt seated reading

Doric (*flings away the book*) What effect can the morals of fourscore have on a mind torn with passion? (*musing*) Is it possible such a soul as her's, can support itself in so humiliating a situation? A kept woman! (*rising*) Well, well—I am glad it is so—I am glad it is so!

Enter Saville.

Sav What a happy dog you are, Doricourt? I might have been mad, or beggar'd, or pistol'd myself without its being mentioned—But you forsooth! the whole female world is concerned for I reported the state of your brain to five different women—The lip of the first trembled; the white bosom of the second heaved a sigh, the third ejaculated, and turned her eye—to the glass the fourth blessed herself: and the fifth said, whilst she pinned a curl, "Well now, perhaps, he'll be an amusing companion, his native dulness was intolerable"

Doric Envy! sheer envy, by the smiles of Hebe! —There are not less than forty pair of the brightest eyes in town will drop crystals, when they hear of my misfortune.

Sav. Well, but I have news for you—poor Hardy is confined to his bed, they say he is going out of the world by the first post, and he wants to give you his blessing

Doric Ill! so ill! I am sorry from my soul He's a worthy little fellow—if he had not the gift of foreseeing so strongly

Sav. Well, you must go and take leave.

Doric What! to act the lunatic in the dying man's chamber?

Sav. Exactly the thing, and will bring your busi-

ness to a short issue; for his last commands must be, that you are not to marry his daughter

Doric. That's true, by Jupiter!—and yet, hang it, impose upon a poor fellow at so serious a moment!—I can't do it

Sav. You must, 'faith. I am answerable for your appearance, though it should be in a strait waistcoat. He knows your situation, and seems the more desirous of an interview

Doric. I don't like encountering Racket—She's an arch little devil and will discover the cheat.

Sav. There's a fellow!—Cheated ninety-nine women, and now afraid of the hundredth

Doric. And with reason—for that hundredth is a widow. [*exeunt.*

SCENE V.—HARDY'S.

Enter Mrs. Racket and Miss Ogle.

Miss Ogle. And so Miss Hardy is actually to be married to-night?

Mrs. Rack. If her fate does not deceive her. You are apprised of the scheme, and we hope it will succeed

Miss Ogle. Deuce take her! she's six years younger than I am. (*aside*)—Is Mr. Doricourt handsome?

Mrs. Rack. Handsome, generous, young and rich.—There's a husband for ye! Isn't he worth pulling caps for?

Miss Ogle. I' my conscience, the widow speaks as though she'd give cap, ears, and all for him. (*aside*) I wonder you didn't try to catch this wonderful man, Mrs Racket?

Mrs. Rack. Really, Miss Ogle, I had not time. Besides, when I marry, so many stout young fellows will hang themselves, that, out of regard to society, in

these sad times, I shall postpone it for a few years This will cost her a new lace—I heard it crack. [*aside*

Enter Sir George and Lady Frances.

Sir Geo. Well, here we are—but where's the Knight of the woful countenance?

Mrs. Rack Here soon, I hope—for a woful night it will be without him.

Sir Geo Oh, fie! do you condescend to pun?

Mrs. Rack Why not? It requires genius to make a good pun—some men of bright parts can't reach it. I know a lawyer who writes them on the back of his briefs; and says they are of great use—in a dry cause.

Enter Flutter

Flut. Here they come!—Here they come!—Their coach stopped, as mine drove off

Lady Fran. Then Miss Hardy's fate is at a crisis. —She plays a hazardous game, and I tremble for her.

Sav. (*without*) Come, let me guide you!—This way, my poor friend! Why are you so furious?

Doric (*without*) The house of death---to the house of death!

Enter Doricourt and Saville.

Ah! this is the spot!

Lady Fran. How wild and fiery he looks!

Miss Ogle. Now, I think, he looks terrified.

Flut. Poor creature, how his eyes work!

Mrs. Rack. I never saw a madman before---let me examine him---will he bite?

Sav Pray keep out of his reach, ladies---you don't know your danger. He's like a wild cat, if a sudden thought seizes him.

Sir Geo. You talk like a keeper of wild cats---how much do you demand for showing the monster?

Doric I don't like this---I must rouse their sensibility. There! there she darts through the air in liquid flames! Down again!—Now I have her—Oh, she burns, she scorches!—Oh, she eats into my very heart!

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Rack. He sees the apparition of the wicked Italian Princess

Flut. Keep her highness fast, Doricourt.

Miss Ogle. Give her a pinch before you let her go.

Doric. I am laughed at!

Mrs. Rack Laughed at!---aye, to be sure; why, I could play the madman better than you ---There! there she is! Now I have her! Ha, ha, ha!

Doric. I knew that devil would discover me (*aside*) I'll leave the house ---I'm covered with confusion.

[*going.*

Sir Geo. Stay sir--- you must not go. 'Twas poorly done, Mr Doricourt, to affect madness, rather than fulfil your engagements.

Doric. Affect madness!---Saville, what can I do?

Sav. Since you are discovered, confess the whole.

Miss Ogle. Aye, turn evidence, and save yourself.

Doric. Yes, since my designs have been so unaccountably discovered, I will avow the whole. I cannot love Miss Hardy---and I will never——

Sav. Hold, my dear Doricourt! be not so rash.--- What will the world say to such——

Doric Damn the world! What will the world give me for the loss of happiness? Must I sacrifice my peace, to please the world?

Sir Geo. Yes, every thing, rather than be branded with dishonour.

Lady Fran. Though *our* arguments should fail, there *is* a pleader, whom you surely cannot withstand ---the dying Mr. Hardy supplicates you not to forsake his child.

Enter Villers.

Vill. Mr. Hardy requests you to grant him a moment's conversation, Mr. Doricourt, though you should persist to send him miserable to the grave. Let me conduct you to his chamber.

Doric. Oh, aye, any where; to the Antipodes---to the moon---Carry me---Do with me what you will.

Mrs. Rack. Mortification and disappointment, then, are specifics in a case of stubbornness---I'll follow, and let you know what passes

[*ex. Vill. Dorr. Mrs. Rack. and Miss Ogle.*

Flut. Ladies, ladies, have the charity to take me with you, that I may make no blunder in repeating the story. [*exit Flutter.*

Lady Fran. Sir George, you don't know Mr Saville [*exit Lady Frances.*

Sir Geo. Ten thousand pardons---but I will not pardon myself for not observing you. I have been with the utmost impatience at your door twice to-day.

Sav I am concerned you had so much trouble, Sir George.

Sir Geo Trouble! what a word!---I hardly know how to address you; I am distressed beyond measure: and it is the highest proof of my opinion of your honour, and the delicacy of your mind, that I open my heart to you

Sav. What has disturbed you, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Your having preserved Lady Frances, in so imminent a danger. Start not, Saville, to protect Lady Frances, was my right. You have wrested from me my dearest privilege.

Sav. I hardly know how to answer such a reproach. I cannot apologize for what I have done.

Sir Geo I do not mean to reproach you, I hardly know what I mean There is one method by which you may restore peace to me; I cannot endure that my wife should be so infinitely indebted to any man who is less than my brother.

Sav. Pray explain yourself.

Sir Geo. I have a sister, Saville, who is amiable; and you are worthy of her. I shall give her a commission to steal your heart, out of revenge for what you have done.

Sav. I am infinitely honoured, Sir George: but---

Sir Geo. I cannot listen to a sentence which begins

with so unpromising a word. You must go with us into Hampshire; and, if you see each other with the eyes I do, your felicity will be complete. I know no one to whose heart I would so readily commit the care of my sister's happiness.

Sav. I will attend you to Hampshire, with pleasure; but not on the plan of retirement. Society has claims on Lady Frances, that forbid it.

Sir Geo. Claims, Saville!

Sav Yes, claims, Lady Frances was born to be the ornament of Courts. She is sufficiently alarmed, not to wander beyond the reach of her protector;—and, from the British Court, the most tenderly anxious husband could not wish to banish his wife. Bid her keep in her eye the bright example who presides there; the splendour of whose rank yields to the superior lustre of her virtue

Sir Geo. I allow the force of your argument. Now for intelligence!

Enter Mrs Racket, Lady Frances, and Flutter.

Mrs. Rack Oh! heavens! do you know——

Flut. Let me tell the story—as soon as Doricourt—

Mrs Rack I protest you sha'n't—said Mr. Hardy—

Flut. No, 'twas Doricourt spoke first—says he—No, 'twas the parson—says he——

Mrs Rack. Stop his mouth, Sir George—he'll spoil the tale.

Sir Geo. Never heed circumstances—the result—the result.

Mrs. Rack. No, no; you shall have it in form.—Mr Hardy performed the sick man like an angel—he sat up in his bed, and talked so pathetically, that the tears stood in Doricourt's eyes

Flut. Aye, stood—they did not drop, but stood.—I shall, in future, be very exact The parson seized the moment; you know, they never miss an opportunity.

Mrs. Rack Make haste, said Doricourt; if I have time to reflect, poor Hardy will die unhappy

Flut. They had got as far as the day of judgment, when we slipt out of the room.

Sir Geo. Then, by this time, they must have reached *amazement*, which, every body knows, is the end of matrimony.

Mrs Rack. Aye, the reverend fathers ended the service with that word, prophetically—to teach the bride what a capricious monster a husband is.

Sir Geo I rather think it was sarcastically—to prepare the bridegroom for the unreasonable humours and vagaries of his help-mate

Lady Fran Here comes the bridegroom of to night.

Enter Doricourt and Villers.—Villers whispers Saville, who goes out.

Omnes Joy! joy! joy!

Miss Ogle. If *he's* a sample of bridegrooms, keep me single!—A younger brother, from the funeral of his father, could not carry a more fretful countenance.

Flut. Oh!—now, he's melancholy mad, I suppose.

Lady Fran. You do not consider the importance of the occasion.

Vill. No; nor how shocking a thing it is for a man to be forced to marry one woman, whilst his heart is devoted to another.

Mrs Rack. Well, now 'tis over, I confess to you, Mr. Doricourt, I think 'twas a most ridiculous piece of Quixotism, to give up the happiness of a whole life to a man who perhaps has but a few moments to be sensible of the sacrifice.

Flut. So it appeared to me.—But, thought I, Mr. Doricourt has travelled—he knows best.

Doric. Zounds! Confusion!—Did ye not all set upon me?—Did'nt ye talk to me of honour—compassion—justice?

Sir Geo. Very true—you have acted according to its dictates, and I hope the utmost felicity of the married state will reward you.

Doric. Never, Sir George! to felicity I bid adieu—but I will endeavour to be content Where is my—I must speak it—where is my *wife?*

Enter Letitia, masked, led by Saville.

Sav. Mr Doricourt, this lady was pressing to be introduced to you.

Doric. Oh! [*starting.*

Let. I told you last night, you should see me at a time when you least expected me—and I have kept my promise

Vill. Whoever you are, madam, you could not have arrived at a happier moment -- Mr. Doricourt is just married.

Let. Married! Impossible! 'Tis but a few hours since he swore to me eternal love. I believed him, gave him up my virgin heart—and now!—ungrateful sex!

Doric Your virgin heart! No, lady—my fate, thank heaven! yet wants that torture. Nothing but the conviction that you was another's, could have made me think one moment of marriage, to have saved the lives of half mankind. But this visit, madam, is as barbarous as unexpected. It is now my duty to forget you, which, spite of your situation, I found difficult enough

Let. My situation!—What situation?

Doric I must apologize for explaining it in this company—but, madam, I am not ignorant, that you are the companion of Lord George Jennet—and this is the only circumstance that can give me peace.

Let. I—a companion! Ridiculous pretence! No, sir, know, to your confusion, that my heart, my honour, my name is unspotted as her's you have married, my birth equal to your own, my fortune large—That, and my person, might have been your's—But, sir, farewell! [*going*

Doric Oh, stay a moment—Rascal! is she not—

Vill. Who, she? O Lord! no—'twas quite a diffe-

rent person that I meant---I never saw that lady before

Doric Then, never shalt thou see her more. [*shakes Flutter*

Mrs Rack. Have mercy upon the poor man!---Heavens! he'll murder him

Doric. Murder him! Yes, you, myself, and all mankind. Sir George—Saville—Villers—'twas you who pushed me on this precipice,—'tis you who have snatched from me joy, felicity, and life

Mrs. Rack. There! now, how well he acts the madman!—This is something like! I knew he would do it well enough, when the time came.

Doric Hard hearted woman! enjoy my ruin—riot in my wretchedness. [*Hardy bursts in.*

Har. This is too much You are now the husband of my daughter, and how dare you show all this passion about another woman?

Doric. Alive again!

Har Alive! aye, and merry Here, wipe off the flour from my face. I was never in better health and spirits in my life - I foresaw 'twould do—Why, my illness was only a fetch, man! to make you marry Letty.

Doric It was! Base and ungenerous! Well, sir, you shall be gratified. The possession of my heart was no object either with you, or your daughter. My fortune and name was all you desired, and these—I leave ye. My native England I shall quit, nor ever behold you more. But, lady, that in my exile I may have one consolation, grant me the favour you denied last night;—let me behold all that mask conceals, that your whole image may be impressed on my heart, and cheer my distant solitary hours.

Let. This is the most awful moment of my life. Oh, Doricourt, the slight action of taking off my mask, stamps me the most blest or miserable of women!

Doric. What can this mean? Reveal your face. I conjure you.

Let. Behold it. [*takes off her mask.*

Doric. Rapture! transport! heaven!

Flut. Now for a touch of the happy madman

Vill. This scheme was mine

Let. I will not allow that This little stratagem arose from my disappointment, in not having made the impression on you I wished The timidity of the English character threw a veil over me, you could not penetrate You have forced me to emerge in some measure from my natural reserve, and to throw off the veil that hid me.

Doric. I am yet in a state of intoxication—I cannot answer you.—Speak on, sweet angel!

Let. You see I *can* be any thing; choose then my character—your taste shall fix it. Shall I be an *English* wife? or, breaking from the bonds of nature and education, step forth to the world in all the captivating glare of foreign manners

Doric You shall be nothing but yourself—nothing can be captivating that you are not I will not wrong your penetration, by pretending that you won my heart at the first interview. but you have now my whole soul—your person, your face, your mind, I would not exchange for those of any other woman breathing.

Har A dog! how well he makes up for past slights! Cousin Racket, I wish you a good husband, with all my heart Mr. Flutter, I'll believe every word you say this fortnight. Mr. Villers, you and I have managed this to a T. I never was so merry in my life—'gad, I believe I can dance. [*footing.*

Doric. Charming, charming creature!

Let. Congratulate me, my dear friends! Can you conceive my happiness?

Har. No, congratulate me; for mine is the greatest.

Flut. No, congratulate me, that I have escaped with life, and give me some sticking plaster—this wild cat has torn the skin from my throat.

Sir Geo. I expect to be among the first who are congratulated——for I have recovered one angel, while Doricourt has gained another.

Har Pho! pho! Don't talk of angels, we shall be happier by half as mortals. Come into the next room; I have ordered out every drop of my forty-eight, and I'll invite the whole parish of St. George's, but what we'll drink it out---except one dozen, which I shall keep under three double locks, for a certain christening that I foresee will happen within this twelvemonth

Doric My charming bride! It was a strange perversion of taste, that led me to consider the delicate timidity of your deportment, as the mark of an uninformed mind, or inelegant manners. I feel now it is to that innate modesty, *English* husbands owe a felicity the married men of other nations are strangers to: it is a sacred veil to your own charms; it is the surest bulwark to your husband's honour: and cursed be the hour---should it ever arrive---in which *British* ladies shall sacrifice to *foreign grace* the grace of modesty!

EPILOGUE.

Nay, cease, and hear me—I am come to scold
Whence this night's plaudits to a thought so old?
To gain a lover, hid behind a mask!
What's new in that? or where's the mighty task?
For instance, now—what Lady Bab, or Grace,
E'er won a lover—in her natural face?
Mistake me not—French red, or blanching creams,
I stoop not to—for those are hackney'd themes;
The arts I mean, are harder to detect,
Easier put on, and worn to more effect;—
As thus————
Do pride and envy, with their horrid lines,
Destroy th' effect of nature's sweet designs?
The mask of softness is at once applied,
And gentlest manners ornament the bride.

Do thoughts too free inform the Vestal's eye,
Or point the glance, or warm the struggling sigh?
Not Dian's brows more rigid looks disclose;
And virtue's blush appears, where passion glows.

And you, my gentle sirs, wear vizors too;
But here I'll strip you, and expose to view
Your hidden features—First I point to you
That well-stuff'd waistcoat, and that ruddy cheek
That ample forehead, and that skin so sleek,
Point out good nature, and a gen'rous heart———
Tyrant! stand forth, and conscious own thy part
Thy wife, thy children, tremble in thy eye;
And peace is banish'd—when the father's nigh.

Sure 'tis enchantment! See, from ev'ry side
The masks fall off!---In charity I hide
The monstrous features rushing to my view——
Fear not, there, grand papa---nor you---nor you
For should I show your features to each other,
Not one amongst ye'd know his friend, or brother
'Tis plain, then, all the world, from youth to age
Appear in masks---Here, only, on the stage,
You see us as we are: Here trust your eyes,
Our wish to please, admits of no disguise.

TEKELI;

OR,

THE SIEGE OF MONTGATZ:

A Melo Drama,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY THEODORE EDWARD HOOK, ESQ

As performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury-Lane.



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1827

TEKELI.

This piece made its first appearance at Drury-Lane, on the 24th of November, 1806, and is said to be a translation by Mr. Hook, Jun. and by him adapted to the English stage. The interest is supported with much ingenuity through the whole performance, and the music on which the success of this species of drama so much depends, well suited to the action. It abounds in loyal and noble sentiments, calculated for the meridian in which it was produced. It was received with the most unbounded applause, and announced for a second representation amidst repeated bravoes.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HUNGARIANS

Count Tekeli
Wolf, *his Friend*
Conrad, *the Miller*
Isidore
Frank
Officers
Counsellors
Citizens

Alexina, *the heroine of Montgatz*
Christine
Attendants

AUSTRIANS

Count Caraffa, *the General*
Edmund, *his Lieutenant*
Bras de fer, } *Soldiers*
Maurice, }
Dragoons
Dancers

☞ *The passages marked with inverted commas are omitted in the representation*

TEKELI;

OR,

THE SIEGE OF MONTGATZ.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A FOREST—NIGHT—ON THE RIGHT A LARGE TREE, ANOTHER NEAR THE MIDDLE OF THE STAGE, AND ON THE LEFT A THICK CLUSTER OF SMALL TREES—DURING THE LAST PART OF THE OVERTURE AND RISING OF THE CURTAIN, A STORM.

Tekeli is discovered lying on the branch of the large tree, and Wolf is asleep at the foot of the other.

Tekeli Wolf! Wolf! he hears me not. Fatigue and want have overpowered him, and even these terrific peals of thunder cannot arouse him from his sleep —(*music—he descends from the tree---storm ceases.*) At whatever hazard it be undertaken we must leave this wood—in which, without the common sustenance the human frame has need of, for two long days we've wandered in distress. I can but die, and if

existence be the sacrifice, how can I better yield it than in an effort to revenge my country's wrongs upon my country's foes—(*touching Wolf gently*) Wolf, my friend.

Wolf. (*waking*) My prince—

Tekeli. Hush, hush—

Wolf. Yes—it is the noble count Tekeli.

Tekeli. Rash man—

Wolf. (*rising*) Pardon, me, much-loved sir, that name is fixed so deeply in my heart, it is the first I utter when I wake: it is a charm against misfortunes, and I am unwilling to abandon it.

Tekeli. Oh! Wolf, what tortures rack my breast for Alexina's safety—for the safety of that wife, who during twelve successive months, has, in the fortress of Montgatz, withstood the vigorous and repeated efforts of the imperialists No earthly power shall keep me longer from her, this day shall terminate my doubts—I'll save her or perish.

Wolf. You may command me, sir, but be cautious—prudence must take the reins from love, and guide you in your course.

Tekeli. Prudence!—oh, Wolf, can I in imagination see my Alexina felled to the ground by some unfeeling arm? - 'tis past endurance! the utmost boundary of this wide-stretched forest is the Torza's bank, thither I'll fly, and having reached the envied stream, plunge in its silvery tide, and—

Wolf. —And die before Montgatz—no, sir—each pass and passage of the river is too strictly guarded to admit a possibility of such an undertaking—escape by force you never will accomplish; confide yourself to me and listen to the dictates of a calmer zeal—restore to Hungary its greatest hero, a protecting husband to your Alexina, and a father to your people.

Tekeli. It shall be so—my fellow citizens have trusted to my care their rights and privileges, and I will

not in one short moment of despair lose all the glory of a nine years' conquest

Wolf. We will gain Montgatz—though I am strenuous for the preservation of *your* life, *mine* is of no such import To serve my prince, my country, and my friend, is all my wish—I will proceed among these mazy paths, and strive to find an outlet that may lead to liberty. Wait here, sir, till I return---let not your desperation force you from concealment---be known, and you are lost. [*exit Wolf.*

Tekeli. Oh! faithful friend---what hardships and what tortures hast thou undergone for me---how shall I repay thee for such noble conduct--what can an exiled king bestow equivalent to such exertion---I am myself a helpless outcast, and:- heart, heart, lie still, calm thy tumultuous beatings, and confide For Providence, who guards the sea boy through the tempest's blast, and shields the warrior in the field of battle, will not forget the child of virtue in the hour of grief.---

Re-enter Wolf.

Wolf, are you there——

Wolf. Hush—speak low.

Tekeli You seem alarmed.

Wolf. We are discovered: the imperialists are here.

Tekeli. Then all is lost———

Wolf. I had not gone an hundred paces ere I saw a lambent flame among the briers, ere I had time to think on what it was, a sentinel advanced and challenged me—I flew—the alarm was given, and they are close at hand.

Music.—Enter Edmund and Austrian soldiers.

Edmund. Halt—I heard their voices. Who's there?

Wolf. Hush—

Edmund Who's there, I say!

[*Wolf beckons Tekeli—music—Wolf and Tekeli having got into the middle of the stage, Edmund in action orders the men to make ready and present—Tekeli and Wolf lay down on their faces, so that the balls*

from the muskets may pass over them—Wolf covers the prince entirely—the instant they are down, at the proper plac in the symphony the soldiers fire.

Edmund. Forward—charge——

Tekeli and Wolf, the instant after the fire, run together into the cluster of trees on the left, unseen to the soldiers, but visible to the audience—the troops cross the stage charging, the trees where they are hid break the rank, and they all pass off—they remain till they are supposed to be out of sight, they then run forward, kneel, and embrace—music expressive the whole time.

Wolf. How is my prince?

Tekeli Oh Wolf, these repeated shocks, the damps of night, and want of food, are all too much for me—I feel I cannot long survive

Wolf. Oh heavens! and where can we expect assistance, so far estranged from all the busy beaten paths of men

Bras de fer (*without*) Halloo—halloo—

Wolf A voice! I hear a voice.

Bras de fer (*without*) Halloo, I say—comrades.

Wolf. It is a soldier—perhaps from him we may gain some nourishment—strive, sir, to reach this tree, for as the morning dawns it will be dangerous to remain without concealment.

Music—Tekeli ascends the tree, Wolf hides behind it—enter Bras de fer, with a basket on his head, and a haversack on his back.

Bras de fer. Maurice—why Maurice, I say—well, there is nothing I am so fond of in the world as society, particularly in a dark forest————why Maurice, where are you?

Enter Maurice, and when close to him—

Maurice Why, at your elbow.

Bras de fer Help me down with these things—there—there—I am tired to death—my limbs are weary—I was, you know, wounded in battle, and—

Maurice. Then it was in the back, I'll be sworn.

Bras de fer. No---'twas in the heel, by mine honour.

Maurice. If you were wounded so terribly, I wonder how you contrived to escape at the last sortie from Montgatz---

Bras de fer. Escape---why, though in a trivial business like this, I am slow; yet, in any thing that concerns my country, such as a *retreat*---la, I'm always the first to run.

Maurice. Oh, you are a fine soldier, no doubt—all I wonder at is, that the general should employ you as his servant, cowardice is——

Bras de fer. I'm no coward—on my honour, none—not a whit on't—only, I have *the greatest antipathy to danger in the world*—and though I've the best inclinations of any soldier breathing, my *limbs* never will execute the mandates of my heart—I'm for all the world like a boat, when courage pulls one way, I'm sure to go smack the other:—but, where is your detachment?

Maurice. I know not—I lost them in the forest, as I did my way; and if I had not fallen *in* with you—

Bras de fer. You would have *fallen out* with yourself for having quitted them; however, the *scent*, me a great soldier, must eat, and he *will* drink; as that is the case, I am sent forward with these provisions to the new post established in the forest, and as I have found you—and the hamper is heavy, we'll divide the eatables, and each carry a share.

Maurice. Agreed—agreed—I make but one bargain, that is—the half I carry be inside my stomach;—carry provisions—all nonsense—no, no—master Bras de fer, we will, like true soldiers, stay here and *recruit.*

Bras de fer. That isn't a bad thought, by mine honour isn't it; under this very tree we'll spread our cloth and as the day dawns, we shall enjoy the prospect around us; come, lend a hand—

[*Music—they unpack cloth, knives, plates, &c. and sit down at the foot of the tree, where Tekeli is—Wolf still behind the trunk.*

Bras de fer. In the first place, there are some biscuits—there (*he puts them by his side, Wolf takes them up, and gives Tekeli*)—a bottle of tokay—with the cork out—

Maurice. Put that away, and give us some brandy—

[*Wolf gives Tekeli the tokay, he drinks.*

Maurice.——May our enemies have such wine as that to drink———

Bras de fer. Come, a bumper; I'll give you a toast, here's honour and honesty.

Maurice. Honour and *honesty*—well here's to our *absent friends*—I say, talking of battles, Bras de fer, did you ever see Tekeli?

Bras de fer. No—I believe I might have once seen him, but I was moving too quickly to discern any object distinctly, and I did'nt stop to look behind me; but, if you mean, am I acquainted with him—personally? no—I never have conversed with him———

Maurice. Conversed—oh, you conceited rogue, converse with Tekeli: why, do you consider that he is much above us; and, no doubt, looks down upon such fellows as we—come, come, eat away, Bras de fer, no need of sparing, for we are to attack Montgatz to night.

Tekeli. Ha!

Maurice. Not so much eating then, all hard work—I long for the time—we will deal desperation among the Hungary rascals——

Bras de fer. Come, come, civility if you please; recollect you were a Hung'ry rascal yourself, before you began to eat; beside, I like talking of fighting, as—

Maurice. As little as you like fighting itself, I believe you—the count Caraffa did intend to lay before Montgatz till famine forced the countess Alexina to surrender: but he has heard that Tekeli is actually

in this forest, together with his friend Wolf, disguised as a peasant——

Bras de fer. Wolf—disguised—a *wolf in sheep's clothing*, I'm afraid——

Maurice. He is determined, however, to take him to-night before we attack; and, therefore, he has doubled all the watches, ordered fires along the Torza, and offers a reward of one hundred ducats for him.

Bras de fer. I say, if we could catch him any where asleep, and tie his hands, and legs, and then—

Maurice. O fie! you are a valiant soldier!—wounded in battle—no, no—if I were to meet him, I should hold it an honour to fight with a man so famous for his conquests and misfortunes.

Bras de fer. (*drawing his sword*) So should I—oh the rascal, I'd pulverise his soul to atoms—and hurl him down the pit of perdition—why, at Vienna, what did he do—nothing—if he were to rush out of that thicket, I'd exterminate him thus—

[*Tekeli and Wolf rush forward---music---Bras de fer tumbles down on his knees, Wolf seizes him---Maurice and Tekeli fight, Tekeli, after a struggle disarms him, and throws him down.*

Maurice I am conquered—strike!

Bras de fer I am conquered---pray don't strike.

Maurice. Speak----ere the blow is given, who are you?

Tekeli. ---I am Tekeli---your life, brave man, is your's,---the sweetest laurel on the victor's brow is that which mercy twines---one favour in return I ask.

Maurice. Demand it, sir.

Tekeli That you to no one mention our meeting till this hour to-morrow---

Maurice I swear it--

Bras de fer. Oh, dear sir, do---you---wish me, sir---to swear, sir?

Wolf. No, fellow, I don't ask an oath of you, but

make one---if you mention a single syllable, damme I'll cut off your ears.

Maurice. Farewell, sir, my life was in your hands, you gave it to me, and you shall find, although your enemy, I can be grateful.

Bras de fer. Come, comrade—come along—

Maurice. Comrade!—you forget—I have had the honour of fighting with Tekeli. [*exit.*

Bras de fer. That fighting is, no doubt, mighty pleasant; but I am so used to get a beating into the bargain, that I don't think it quite so desirable a mark of favour as I did—good day, sirs—oh— [*exit.*

Tekeli. Wolf, did you hear—this very evening is appointed for the attack, this very evening do they mean to conquer Alexina, and to bear her off in triumph to Vienna; there to expose her to the scoffs and insults of a phrenzied mob---but they shall not so easily obtain the glory that they thirst for: the sword that pierces Alexina's heart must reach it only through Tekeli's breast. I have an arm invigorated by the hardships of a warlike life, strengthened by heaven and the justice of my cause---that arm shall reach my Alexina, or I die---come on my friend---with this good sword I'll hew me out a passage to the heroine of Montgatz---

[*rustic music and a chorus heard at a distance.*

Wolf. Hark---here [redacted] peasants celebrating a wedding—perhaps by [redacted] of these disguises we may mingle in the rural sports, and easily escape the vigilance of the imperial troops.

Tekeli. Always delays?

Wolf. Tis not till evening this attack is to be made, tis now just dawn, there is enough of time for stratagem; come, come, sit down—agree—in the name of Alexina I conjure you sit—they are here—feign yourself sick and lame

Tekeli sits at the foot of the tree, the chorus recommences, and, to a rustic march---enter the peasants with ISIDORE *at their head.*

CHORUS.

Sound the sweet melodious flute,
Strew each blooming flower,
Strike the tabor, pipe, and lute,
Hail the nuptial hour.

Wolf. (*aside*) Conceal your arm.---Ha, ha, my brave fellows --where are you going to day—so smart and so early too?

Isidore. Oh, sir, not far—not far—only to the mill of Keben.

Wolf. (*aside to Tekeli*) The mill of Keben, three short miles from Montgatz. and a bridge over the Torza—some merriment going forward I suppose!

Isidore. A wedding, an' save you—and my own too.

Wolf. Marry and go to a mill, that's by way of getting used to the *clack* I suppose—well, I wish you joy, sir—(*aside to Tekeli*) In this time of jollity we can escape completely unobserved.

Isidore. Well, come on my lads, we're late, come on.

Wolf. One word, sir—you must know that I look upon myself as judge of cou[illegible]nces; and by yours I am apt to suppose that y[illegible]—a—devilish good fellow.

Isidore. You're pure skilful at your trade, for that's what every body says.

Wolf. You wouldn't, I'm sure, by that eye of yours refuse a *bit* of service where you could grant it

Isidore. Not I—and much less on my wedding-day, seeing, as if I was to do an unkind action, it would bring unhappiness upon me all my life.

Wolf. My friend and myself travelling on [illegible]

from Zathmar to Ungwar to settle the writings of an estate—

Isidore. Oh dear—you are not lawyers are you ?

Wolf. No, no—*plain honest men ;*—but he being an invalid, and having torn his leg with the bramble here, cannot proceed---he has fallen again under the tree where we passed the night---now we only want to get to the mill of Keben, and—

Isidore. Don't say another word—we'll do't—here my lads, chop down some branches, and make a litter for this poor traveller—and we'll carry him by turns, and my father in law Conrad will cherish you for the sake of your misfortunes.

[*music—they cut down boughs, and form a litter.*

Wolf But how do you manage your gaiety, are there not soldiers in the mill of Keben ?

Isidore. Not in the mill.

Wolf. (*aside*) Thank heaven, we are safe.

Isidore. There is a guard at the foot of the bridge ; yes, that they watch deuced close, to keep away provisions, and more than even them, to keep away Tekeli ; for they say it would be a great misfortune if he were to get into the fortress—he is so mischievous—he's the very devil ! and so the count Caraffa will have him, and wherever he is he better take care of himself, for if he is taken, no more quarter will be shown him than would be to a common soldier.

Tekeli. He want[illegible] he can defend himself,—(*Wolf looks at him*)—(*softening his voice*)—mercy is no more his due than, 'tis the poorest private in his ranks, if both alike encounter danger for their country's good.

Isidore. Well, are you really my friends.

All. See 'tis completed—

[*music—they lay Tekeli on the litter—Wolf takes his hand—they raise him and carry him off—procession follows as it entered.*

CHORUS.

Sound the sweet melodious flute,
Strew each blooming flower,
Strike the tabor, pipe, and lute,
Hail the nuptial hour.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE 1.

An interior view of the mill of Keben—in the front a barn filled with the implements of husbandry, beyond is a court-yard bounded by a brick wall two feet high, behind which runs the river Torza, on the left in the third wing a water mill, beyond the mill a low wooden bridge runs from the second wing on the right of the last wing on the left, before the termination of the bridge, on the right a wind mill with a store-house beneath, in the back at the supposed distance of three miles is the fortress of Montgatz on a rock, the mills are both discovered in motion and continue during the scene—in front two or three barrels.

Enter cautiously from one door, Christine, she crosses to one on the opposite side and listens.

Christine. So, my father is busy—and Isidore not returned—he promised to be here at eight and it is now nine. If he was not to come now how the girls would laugh at me. I wish he was here, for without him every thing appears dull

AIR.

How sweet are the flowers that grow by yon fountain,
And sweet are the cowslips that spangle the grove,
And sweet is the breeze that blows over the mountain,
Yet none are so sweet as the lad that I love,
Then I'll weave him a garland,
A fresh flowing garland
With lilies and roses
And sweet blooming posies,
A garland I'll give to the lad that I love.

It was down in the vale where the sweet Torza gliding,
Its murmuring stream ripples through the dark grove.
I own'd what I felt, and all passion confiding,
To ease the fond sighs of the lad that I love.
Then, &c. &c.

Chris. Well, Mr Isidore, this is very pretty treatment on a wedding-day. (*music—she looks out*) Here he comes, and all my anger has subsided. I'll run into my room, and wait till he comes for me.

[*Music—Tekeli is brought on by peasants as before, Wolf and Isidore, lads and lasses.*

Isid Now silence—silence—I'll go and apprise my father in-law.

Enter Conrad from the door of the mill

Con. Is it you, Isidore?—your hand

Isid There, father—we have made you wait—but it wasn't our fault, like. We met with a poor undone devil in the forest, who was so lame, that his comrade and he passed all the night under a tree, and he

prayed us to bring him here to get some refreshment—so—so I thought, mayhap, you wouldn't be angry.

Conrad. Angry—no, my house and my heart are always open to distress, come, where is he? (*Tekeli descends from the litter*) welcome, sir—welcome—

Tekeli. Let us, I pray you, be no interruption to your sports, honest Conrad.

Conrad. That man has no mean appearance.

Isidore. Where is Christine?

Conrad In her chamber—let's go and announce your arrival.

Isidore. I will, an' like you—but stop, father, I will give her a nosegay—ay, in good style too—

[*Music—he knocks at the door, and kneels.*

Isidore. Now you may come out.

Enter Conrad, leading Christine, followed by a group of girls—they form in an instant a bower over their heads with the branches of trees.

Conrad. Come—come, stir about, let's have refreshment—you, sir, shall join us, you must needs come.

Tekeli. Sir, you are very kind.

Con. I never can be kind enough to those pursued by misfortune. We will take care of you, sir, and if you feel yourself too weary to enjoy our sports, you shall have the best bed in the province, far enough from us and all our noisy mirth. I'll stop my mill that you may sleep in quiet. Do as you like; ask for whatever you may want; and, provided it be not contrary to the rules of honesty; or the interest of the emperor—you shall have it.

Tekeli. Ten thousand thanks—(*aside*) contrary to the interests of the emperor!—you heard that, Wolf—

Wolf. (*aside*) Peace—

Tekeli. (*aside*) Look at that fortress—my last, my only hope.

Wolf. (*aside*) We will be there anon

Con. Come, sit, friends. [*music—they seat themselves*] That's right my children; now dance away, and it will be your turn to feast afterwards.

DANCE—BY THE CORPS DU BALLET.

[*By means of a pulley fastened to the beam at the top of the barn, they raise a dome of flowers over the heads of those at the table, and the dancers dance round with the garlands—the dance ended.*

Con. Thanks, my sweet girls—and now, Isidore, give us a song. [*drums are heard—they all rise*

Chris. What can this mean?

Con. Go, Isidore, and see.

Isid. (*goes to the bridge*) Oh, father, it is a large detachment of soldiers coming to the mill.

Wolf. Then all is lost

Con. To the mill?—show you respect then—go out—go out, youngsters, and meet them.

[*Music—they form a procession with their streamers, &c and exeunt—Conrad going after the rest—Wolf remains, and Tekeli, who calls back Conrad.*

Tekeli. (*looking about*) Honest miller—you are attached to the house of Austria—

Con. I would die in its service—

Tekeli. Suppose the greatest of its enemies, helpless, wretched, defenceless, and forlorn, took shelter in your mill—and was to ask your help—would you afford it?

Con Defenceless?—would I—ay, that I would—I was a soldier, sir, for thirty years myself, and never had an enemy out of the field of battle—there isn't a Hungarian among them I feel the slightest animosity towards but one—him, I should find it hard to bring my bosom to afford compassion to—

Tekeli Who is he?

Con. The count Tekeli.

Tekeli. He is before you.—I am Tekeli!!

Con You—Tekeli?—is it possible—you Tekeli?—(*drums*)—your danger terrifies me—were we in the field, we should be foes—you are a hero, sir, and must not, shall not die ignobly. I took you, heedless of the consequences, a helpless stranger to my bosom, and I will not give you up because our principles may differ; no—I promised you the rights of hospitality—and you shall have them (*drums*) What's to be done—these men, do doubt, will search every apartment of the mill—(*looks around*) we have no time to lose—let me consider—that cask—beneath that barrel you may remain concealed.

Wolf. A thousand thanks—quick—sir, be quick—

Con. Raise it. (*Tekeli shows unwillingness—they raise the cask, Tekeli goes under it*) And you his companion,—mingle with my people, and perchance, you'll pass unnoticed—one instant later, and all our efforts would have proved in vain.

[*March—enter peasants and streamers—Isidore and Christine, Edmund, soldiers, Maurice, peasants, Frank, &c &c —they range themselves*

Edm (*to the corporal*) Place a sentinel on the bridge—let nothing pass or repass without examination, till we have searched the mill. (*the corporal goes out, and the sentinel is placed*) Are you the master of this mill?

Isid. The young master, an' like you—because I have wedded the old master's daughter

Edm You then are Conrad.

Con At your command

Edm Have you another entrance to this mill?

Con. (*points off the stage*) One—there—towards the forest.

Edm. (*despatches a sentinel and sergeant*) My commission here is to make strict search for Tekeli—

Wolf. (*aside*) O heavens!

Edm. The emperor offers one hundred ducats to whoever will find and deliver him up

Frank. I ask your pardon, sir—but how are we—who never saw Tekeli, to know his person?

Edm. (*reads the description*) "The count Tekeli in height five feet eight inches; dark hair and eyes of a commanding aspect, supposed to be in a peasant's dress."

Frank. (*aside*) One hundred ducats are one hundred ducats, and if this be he, I'll have them.—Sir—I know—

Con. (*pushing him away*) You know nothing, you'll search the mill, sir?

Edm. With your permission.

Con. Christine, conduct these gentlemen.

Chris. This way, an' it pleases you, sweet sir.

Isid. (*aside*) Sweet sir—umph—he a soldier—she my wife—damme but I'll go too.

[*The soldiers and Edmund, with Isidore and Christine, go into the mill—all the other peasants go out at the back, except Frank, who lurks behind—Wolf walks out of hearing, but not out of sight.*

Frank. Conrad—master Conrad—I say—I can instruct you how to gain 50 ducats

Con. How? (*aside*) he has recognised him.

Frank. By giving up the man they are in search of.

Con. Who?

Frank. The count Tekeli.

Con. Ridiculous

Frank. He is here.

Conrad. Pooh.

Frank. Upon my honour.

Conrad. Nonsense.

Frank. It is astonishing you did not mark him.

Conrad. I had other things to think of.

Frank. He is the comrade of that man, (*pointing to Wolf*) and he that your son-in-law found in the forest this morning. I examined him well at table, and he is word for word as the captain described him; besides, he has disappeared since the soldiers have been here

So as he would be taken in your house, I thought in honour you should have half the reward.

Conrad. Honour!—do you talk of honour?—you who for a few bits of gold would yield to punishment and death a man who never did you harm.

Frank. But—I am poor—

Conrad. So am I—but I will not betray him. I have with hard and constant labour saved a portion for my daughter; this is her wedding-day—I have it here—125 ducats is the sum, sir—take them (*draws the purse*)—they're your's—she will live more happily when assured her poverty has saved a fellow-creature.

Frank. I will——till I can get the whole reward myself.— [*he skulks off.*

Music—enter Edmund, Isidore, Maurice, soldiers, and Christine.

Christine. Well, father, here we are.

Isidore. They have been looking every where.

Conrad. Well, sir, are you satisfied?

Edmund Perfectly.

Conrad. Here are two rooms you have not seen yet.

Edmund. (*merely looks in*) The favourable opinion that the count Caraffa has of you, shall be, if possible, strengthened by the fair account that I shall render Now then for mirth.

Isidore. (*aside*) I don't half like that fine fellow;—(*to him*) yes, sir,—when you are pleased to go.

Christine. (*endeavouring to correct him*) He means, sir—that we are not sufficiently skilled in the art to dance before such gentlemen as you—

Edmund. I am sorry our presence should be a restraint upon you, for here's my warrant to establish an outpost in the mill till Montgatz be taken.

Wolf. (*aside*) All is lost.

Conrad. We shall be happy in your company.

Isidore. I shall be ashamed to marry before all these people.

Conrad reads the warrant, Edmund looks over, Christine and Isidore converse, and Maurice comes from among the soldiers, and touches Wolf.

Maurice. 'Tis you—

Wolf. Yes—your oath—

Maurice. I shall remember—

Bras. (*on the bridge*) I tell you my name is Bras de fer, and I will go to my master—I will—

Edm It is my servant.—(*the sentinel refuses him admittance*)—let him come—Bras de fer!

Enter Bras de fer in a rage.

Bras. Fine treatment for a man in office, to be huffed and hauled about—I'll resent it, and resign—

Edm. Terrible indeed—are the provisions safe?

Bras. Yes, sir,—I believe the chief part of 'em are safe enough—and in the forest we had such an incident—we— [*Maurice comes forward with wine.*

Mau. (*to Bras*) A word and you are dead—come—come, Bras de fer, you are out of breath, take some wine—

Bras. I thank you—I'm not dry—

Mau. A hint—

Bras. I take it.

Edm. Come, sirrah, you abuse my patience,—your story.

Bras Why, sir, as I was saying—sir—I—I—I—dont know what I was saying, sir—

Con. This gentleman is not very communicative, therefore, as this is my daughter's wedding-day, I request you to make yourselves merry. Come, Christine, do the honours of the house, serve the wine while I go fetch some of my oldest tokay [*exit Con.*

[They all seat themselves, two dragoons among the rest.

Edm. To the taking of Montgatz!

All. Huzza!

2d Drag. I'll give his health—who first sets foot in Montgatz——

1st Drag. Thank you—

2d Drag. Thank me, it won't be you—I have long bespoke that honour myself.

Edm. This warmth pleases me. [*aside.*

1st Drag. You'll never have it—I am as certain I shall be the first there, as I am that I could put in three bullets through the bung-hole of that cask at thirty paces distance.

2d Drag. That may be, for you'll neither do one nor the other——

1st Drag. I'll wager you a month's pay of that—

2d Drag. Agreed—captain, your leave.

Edm. You have it.

[*They rise—music—they load—make ready, present—Wolf jumps on the tub.*

1st Drag. Come, move, that we may take our shots.

Wolf. Had'nt you better fire at a bottle, or a tree, or a—

Sold. No—because the great art is to fire clean through both sides; so get out of the way.

Wolf. I can't—this cask is of great use to my master, and I will not see it spoiled.

Bras. This gentleman wants correction.

Enter Conrad.

Con. What's the matter my friends? what's the matter?

Wolf. Here, sir, they were going to fire at your cask—but I would not let them.

Bras. Great harm, indeed, shooting an old barrel—it is good for nothing.

Con. Pardon me, sir, every thing is of use in my house—besides, sir, firing among corn—

Edm. Oh! very true.

Con. If you choose in the meadow to decide—

Edm. 'Tis well, Conrad—there you shall try your skill.

1st Drag. Come, then, as they wish it so.

2d Drag. Well, you'll get nothing by that.

1st Drag. That's as time will show—will you captain, condescend to be the judge?

Con. You ought, sir, to decide.

Edm. 'Tis well—I'm ready. [*exeunt.*

Isid. I should like to know who'll win.

Chris. O lord, it will frighten me—

Isid. Pooh—come along you fool. [*exeunt.*

Con. What's to be done?

Wolf. Heaven knows—he cannot long survive the heat—the want of air—

Con. The sentinel too overlooks us ——to-night I send some grain to my storehouse across the bridge; if in one of the sacks he—but he would not submit.

Wolf. To any thing for Alexina's sake.

Con. He must be saved!—Christine!—

Enter Christine and Isidore.

Chris Here am I.

Isid. Here am I—what do you want father?

Con Not you.

Isid. I know that, but I dont choose to leave my wife among all these soldiers.

Con. Wait here, child—while this friend of mine and I have some conversation in your room; and if any one comes near, cough so that I may hear you.

Wolf (*to Tekeli in the cask*) Trust yourself to our guidance—stir not—

[*music—they raise the cask and carry it off.*

Isid Christine—what's all that about?

Chris. I know not—what is it to us?

[*Bras de fer appears at the wall listening.*

Bras. There she is—somebody with her—so as I can't talk, I'll e'en listen.

Isid. What is gone with the man we found in the forest?

Chris. Oh—now your curiosity is all afloat.

Isid. But then our being to cough if any one come.

Chris. Ay, I wonder what effect that will have?

Bras. I'll try— [*coughs.*

Enter Conrad.

Con. Who coughed?

Isid. Not I—Christine—

Chris. It was'nt I—

Con. I wish you'd leave these jokes. [*exit.*

Bras. Treason's abroad, I'll go and inform the captain. [*exit.*

Re-enter Conrad.

Con. Isidore, assist me—and place this barrel where it stood just now.—(*music—Isidore rolls in the barrel, and Conrad brings in a sack—Wolf enters with one in which is Tekeli*) Place that sack with the rest, manage so as to give him air, and I will draw off Christine and Isidore.——Here, children, I want you in my room.

Both. Yes, father. [*they all go—Wolf places the sack, and exit.*

Music—enter Bras de fer, Edmund, and soldiers.

Edm. A cough, do you say?

Bras. Listen, sir—I'll show you the plot—there, stand back a moment—now then—(*coughs*)—stop—(*coughs*)—What—nothing——

Edm. Wonderful discovery—— [*they all laugh.*

Bras. You may laugh; there is a stranger with Conrad—and I know it.

Edm. I'll satisfy both you and myself—open—(*the door opens*)—where is Conrad?

Enter Christine.

Chris. Here, sir—father, you are wanted.

Edm. With your leave I'll go in myself.

[*exit Edmund.*

Bras. Ay, ay, that's best—make sure work of it—(*to the soldiers*)—and do you all stay here, and let no one pass without the captain's permission.

Enter Conrad, Isidore, and Edmund.

Edm. Pardon me, Conrad, but it is my duty to look to the interest of the emperor

Bras. He has not looked about properly, I'll go and search myself. [*exit Bras de fer.*

Con. We were arranging how best we were able to accommodate you during your stay here.

Edm. I see, sir, I have been deceived—it was a servant of mine who came to inform me of this important discovery—he has often played me such tricks before, and I'll punish him for it, by keeping him a prisoner while we stay here. [*gives orders to the soldiers, who stop Bras de fer as he advances.*

Mau. Confine him—

Bras. Not me—it's a mistake, it is not me.—

Edm. It is my orders, sir.

Con. Not in that room, sir—'tis my daughter's.

Bras. Faith, it's the only prison where I would remain voluntarily——

Con. You had better take him to the top of the mi

Isid. Ay, he will there have a fine view of the fort.

Bras. Oh, captain, pray forgive me.

Edm. Away with him. [*they carry him off, an presently he looks out at the top windo*

Bras. Halloo, captain, this is an exalted station i deed—military promotion with a witness; howeve unlike most prisoners, I have a good *prospect* befo me—

Edm. Hold your tongue, fellow, or I'll have yc bastinadoed.

Con. Now, sir, with your permission, we will cle away these sacks, and send them to the storehouse.

Edm. 'Tis well—

Con. Halloo—Joseph—Pierre—Albert, here.

Edm. Pierce each sack with a bayonet as it passe [*Music—enter Miller's men and Wolf—they move t sacks, and at every sack that goes over the bridge, t sentinel sticks his bayonet into it—Edmund goes an leans over the wall.*

Mau. (*aside*) Where is the prince?

Wolf. Here

Mau. (*aside*) You dare not pass; I'll serve you now—you shall behold a conquered enemy's warm gratitude.——Captain Edmund, I am a suppliant in the cause of sickness. Vorbeck—the sentinel on the bridge—was wounded in the last attack; he complained of weariness but now—he has been on duty while we were feasting—let him have wine, and while he drinks I'll take his post.

Edm. I can have no objection—your humanity is laudable; to save the lives of valiant men is a desirable object

Mau. To save a brave man's life was my wish, sir.

[*he takes his place, Vorbeck comes down, and Christine gives him wine.*

Con. Come, stir, stir—on with you—that fellow, captain, is the laziest of my men; I verily believe he wishes the sack to hop over the bridge of itself.

[*Music—Wolf carries off the sack of Tekeli—Maurice feigns to pierce it with his bayonet—Wolf crosses—Vorbeck has finished his wine, and returns.*

Con. Now business is done, let us enjoy a little mirth. [*drums and trumpets.*

Edm. Ha!—the general count Caraffa visiting the posts

[*March—the detachment in the mill, with Maurice commanding, march on, and range themselves—the march is observed at a distance coming, till they increase in size, and cross the bridge—the mill detachment present arms—enter soldiers,—standards of Austria, the general's aids-du-camp, the count Caraffa, soldiers—the mill detachment fall in the rear, and range themselves.*

Caraffa. Edmund, have you made strict search here?——

Edm. I have, my lord, but unsuccessfully—

Car. Tekeli's here——

Con. That on my oath I do deny, my lord

Car. Denial's vain a peasant coming here has laid the information—is he, or has he been here?—speak—

Con. I cannot answer that, my lord.

Car. What hinders it?

Con. Honour, sir.

Car. In such a circumstance honour is but a word.

Con. You think so—honour to me is every thing—the emperor shall not deprive me of it—

Car. You brave his orders, then—fear lest—

Con. I fear—no, sir—you are too just—you'll not abuse the power you enjoy—(*a volley of musketry*)—what's that——

Bras. (*from the top of the mill*) Oh! my lord, pardon me—I see, a man has escaped from a sack—and he, together with the man who carried him, are fired at—now they run—now they are close on them—they reach the river—ford it—now they have crossed—

Con (*falls on his knees*)—Then heaven be praised, I've done my duty——Tekeli lives, and I am happy.

Car. Ha!—this is too daring—Edmund, you have turned traitor, and abused your trust.

Con. Tarry a moment, my lord—he is not guilty—I alone am culpable—Tekeli threw himself before me in disguise—at length he owned himself—told me that I alone could then decide his fate—I love, adore my king, and would have died to have secured Tekeli—but when I saw the glorious hero at my feet, a suppliant to my bounty—it would have been an act of infamy in me to suffer him to be betrayed—yet will I not deprive the state of any jot of its revenge, and here I stand prepared to die—for him who is my greatest enemy——

Car. On this the king alone determines—come on.

Chris. What, my dear father, leave us—

Con. Yes, daughter, yes—be not alarmed. The laws we boast of will afford the meanest their protection; and while the power of pardon rests in so good a monarch's breast as our's, the innocent will never

suffer for the guilty [*they all fall into the procession.*

Edm. Lead on—it is not yet too late to take Tekeli.

[*march—they cross the bridge—the music sinks.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—THE HALL OF THE CASTLE OF MONTGATZ—IN THE BACK A LARGE PAINTED WINDOW, REACHING FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM—A TABLE COVERED WITH A CARPET, ON WHICH LIES A MANTLE AND A HELMET—THE CURTAIN RISES TO SOLEMN MUSIC—ALEXINA DISCOVERED AT THE HARP—KNEELING.

AIR.

Peace be to those who nobly bleed,
In freedom and their country's cause,
Protecting in the hour of need,
Their charter, liberty, and laws.

Loud swell the dirge—the anthem swell,
Fresh vivid wreaths fair maids entwine,
That may to future ages tell,
Their lives heroic, and their fate divine.

Alex. Heroic men!—to thee this tribute sure is due; the tear of sorrow shall for ever keep thy laurels green—ye noble warriors, on whose valour I had fixed my firm resistance—with more than all the brave Belleski—I would have parted with his hand, ere I would willingly have seen thee fall. But they are gone—last

night's attack has cost me dear, and I am left the isolated leader of discouraged officers and weakened soldiers. Oh, my Tekeli when I behold this letter which I've bathed wtth tears for five long months, in which you promised to be here with forces from the Turkish court, ere the then present week expired—I—(*noise*)—hah?—what's that—(*shout*)—hope and fear rule in my heart by turns—who's there?

Enter 1*st officer.*

1*st offi.* Madam, it is impossible to restrain the fury of the people, forgetting in the hour of peril all the oaths they've taken—all the duty that they owe to you—they surround the castle, and demand an audience of your highness—let me conjure you to take some measures to appease them——surrender is inevitable---

Alex. Surrender? sir---

1*st offi.* Consider your life, madam.

Alex. Consider my honour---I am your leader---and I trust in heaven rightly to direct my steps---take from my private stores the whole of those provisions there reserved for me----distribute them to such as need -----then call the council hither, and their wise decrees shall quickly be made known——fly.—(*exit* 1*st officer*)—Dearest Tekeli, if 'tis the will of fate that we should meet no more---if 'tis decreed that thy high-beating heart be pierced by some assassin's knife; and if thy glorious soul has winged its flight to those seraphic realms where all our sorrows end---if thy celestial spirit hovers over me, or flits among this ancient castle's misty darkness, at once the pride and sepulchre of all our ancestors, inspire me with that heroic fortitude that has for twelve successive years made thee the terror of thy foes, the glory of thy country, and the idol of thy wife.

[*Solemn music—enter soldiers, pages bearing rolls of parchment, two ensigns, &c. the standard of Tekeli, page, helmet, and plume on a cushion, the great standard of Hungary, the council, two and two, soldiers —Alexina seats herself upon the throne, the council*

form a semi-circle, the plume and helmet being placed upon a table.

Alex. My brave Hungarians---we are here assembled at a crisis more important than perhaps another yet has been throughout the siege;---on our decision hangs the fate of Hungary;---this letter of Tekeli, and the promise of Turkish aid, ought well to be considered, lest at the moment when we have signed a treaty that for ever may destroy our fame, *he* may arrive with succours and assistance for us;—say, then, my noble friends, whether 'tis better that we should be so bold that calm observers might declare us rash, or be so cautious that we must without resistance yield up the rights and freedom of our country—speak—I shall abide your counsels--that monarch only is secure of conquest who rules his soldiers' hearts. Shall we withstand their efforts, and reject their offers? *our* country's soldiers never make a treaty with a foe, till they have conquered them. [*trumpets.*

Enter 1*st officer.*

--A messenger from count Caraffa is without.

Alex. Admit him. (*exit officer*) From Caraffa?—he must not see and carry to the camp the state of our distress. Fill all the ramparts with the strongest of my men—chase from your countenances the haggard care that sits upon your brow—we must deceive the envoy from the count.—Bring me my arms!

[*The most sumptuous chandeliers descend from the ceiling—the hall is filled with ladies—they put on her armour, and throw a regal mantle over her—music, &c.—she seats herself when dressed.*

Enter Edmund, blindfold,—he starts when unblinded —music ceases.

Edm. Madam—before the count Caraffa makes his last attack, by which Montgatz must fall, his feelings prompt him to conduct himself towards you in such a manner as a female warrior's valour merits—he there-

fore sends me to propose a general pardon for yourself and garrison.

Alex. Hold, sir—did we accept a pardon, we should own that we were wrong. No, sir, the wrong is not with us—the emperor, your master, would deprive us of the privileges we have long enjoyed—he still contends we shall not choose our king—he will depute a viceroy—he, too, refuses us the exercise of our religion, and by the murder of our noblest lords, answers the treaties they were sent to make—these are the acts for which he offers us a pardon. No, sir, the land we live in can recur to all its ancient rights without the imputation of rebellion—to regain those rights is now our object; and, till we do, the sword once drawn for liberty, will not be sheathed—we fight for freedom, sir—we gain it, or we die.

Edm. 'Tis well—yet let not all these vain built hopes of conquest lure you on; do you suppose an army all victorious, high in the flush of health, and warm with triumph, *can* be repulsed by ranks of weak enfeebled soldiers?—

Alex. Enfeebled—(*she strikes her sword against her shield, and immense windows flying open, discover the whole range of battlements covered with men*)—look there—sir—tell the count Caraffa, if he is determined to possess Montgatz, *they* will exact a noble price for it.

Edm. Your provisions cannot last.

Alex. We will not starve while there are any in your camp.

Edm. Your ammunition—stores—will soon be all expended—your ramparts will be soon a heap of ruins—your men will fall—and—

Alex. There will remain enough to close the gates while Alexina lives.

Edm. Boast on great lady—yours is the vain and empty hope of something yet to come: we speak upon

the certainty of what we have.—Tekeli—yours, the brave, the great Tekeli, is our prisoner.

Council. (*all rise*) Tekeli!!!

Alex. (*rushes in among them*) Hold—Hungarians, ye are deceived—this is a deception of the foe—an airy fabrication to alarm the feelings of an anxious wife—no, sir, was our Tekeli in your power—you would not *ask* a treaty but *demand* one—you know that he is near us, and you fear least he should gain admittance.

Soldiery. Huzza, Huzza!—live, live—Tekeli!

[*cannons, drums, trumpets.*

Alex. You hear—you hear—

Edm. Confusion!

[*Enter, amid the shouts, Tekeli and Wolf, who, as they enter, throw off their peasant's dresses, and discover superb military habits—Alexina and Tekeli embrace, and form a group.*

Alex. Unhoped for happiness—

Tekeli. My Alexina—

Alex. Did I not say so—my heart did not deceive me—(*she embraces him—then turns to Edmund*)—now tell Caraffa that Montgatz becomes impregnable.

Edm. This transport is excusable—I have now to say the count Caraffa has commanded me to make it known he gives no quarters to Hungarians.

Tekeli. Those are his orders are they?—soldiers hear Tekeli's—when we attack let mercy check your zeal, and yield that aid we have hitherto been wont to use;—out of the field all murder is a crime—war is a curse to nations; and 'tis a heavenly task to soften down its horrors, and prevent the shedding more of human blood than mere necessity requires.

Edm. Believe me, sir, I merely spoke the message; it grieved me I should be the bearer of it—farewell.

[*the bandage put on—exit Edmund.*

Tekeli. (*taking Alexina's hand*) This night indeed, immediately, we are to be attacked—all is now ready

for the engagement—they say that it shall be the last—Hungarians prove it so: and if the presence of your general—the man who loves you with his heart and soul, can add new vigour to that courage known and tried, that holds your hearts in keeping—follow my steps—I'll be wherever danger calls. Bring forth our standards. [*standards brought.*

FOR GOD AND FOR OUR COUNTRY.

This is our motto, young Hungarians—now remember 'tis your duty rather to die than yield these precious ensigns; these all glorious marks of honour that so oft have flown in conquest—lead on.

[*March—exeunt—soldiers—band of music—standards—council—Tekeli and Alexina.*

SCENE II.—A HALL.

March—enter the procession as it went off in the last scene.

Tekeli. My noble friends, the hour is come that must decide your country's fate—consider this and firmly strike the blow that stamps your liberty or subjugation—this emperor would rob us of our freedom, and invade our rights; ambition leads him on; yet not that emulative zeal that raises men to deities, but that distracting self-created power that seeks to level all besides itself—these are his hopes, his wishes these—'tis ours to prove them vain—let them advance—for thus united in ourselves, our heart-blood high with loyalty and honour, we fight like lions for our hallowed land—no force can equal this—composed of all our chiefest citizens who boldly now step forth in danger's front to serve their country, and their king—heroic volunteers in freedom's cause—lead on, and charge upon their firm fixed ranks.

[*flourish of trumpets—exeunt.*

SCENE III.—THE WHOLE EXTENT OF THE BATTLEMENTS, THE TOWERS, AND WALLS OF MONTGATZ,—ON AN ELEVATED SITUATION HANGS THE LARGE HUNGARIAN STANDARD—ON THE DISTANT HILLS CARAFFA'S CAMP—THE AUSTRIAN COLOURS FLYING—A GATE AND PORTCULLIS—MARCH.—

Enter troops in all directions, Tekeli, Alexina, Wolf, &c. &c.—they range the armed inhabitants—shout—three battles on ramparts—retreat sounded—silence—stage cleared in front.

Enter Bras de fer.

Bras. Oh dear—oh la——(*cannon*)——oh!—what would my master make me come here for—why should I die because the Hungarians name their king or the emperor—it's all one to me—I've no pretensions to the crown—I'll go and hide myself—I will, by the valour of a soldier—if I could find any old tree or tower where I could lie snug till it was all over, I should be mighty glad, for then if we should conquer, I should have my share of the booty; and if they, I should be a prisoner of war ready made to their hands, without bruise or blemish—(*cannon*)—oh dear!

[*runs off.*

Battle commences—an ensign and Austrian soldier fight—the ensign tears the colours from the staff, and ties them round his body, fighting on—Tekeli enters, draws a pistol, shoots the soldier, embraces the ensign.

Enter Caraffa.

Car. This time you do not pass. [*they fight.*

A mine is spring behind—part of the castle appears in flames—the retreat is sounded—Tekeli overcomes Caraffa—he falls

Soldiers. (*shout*) They fly, they fly—live, live, Tekeli! !

Music—all the characters rush in—Alexina with the Austrian standard, which she throws at Tekeli's feet—he catches her in his arms—the stage fills on all sides—Conrad, Christine, Isidore, and all the peasants join the group—the Austrian soldiers kneel—shouts—flourish—form a picturesque group.

END OF TEKELI; OR, THE SIEGE OF MONTGATZ.

A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER:

A Farce,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY THOMAS MORTON, ESQ.

Author of Speed the Plough, Cure for the Heart-Ache, School of Reform, &c. &c.



NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES WILEY, NO 3 WALL STREET, H C CAREY, & I LEA, AND M'CARTY & DAVIS, PHILADELPHIA. AND SAML. H PARKER, BOSTON

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of this Farce, who is now residing in France, consigned it to my care, in my double capacity of stage manager and old friend, to do what I thought best by it. The stage is so much indebted to him for many excellent dramas, and I am so much bound to him by ties of sincere regard, that I have been exceedingly anxious for its success. Those who have witnessed its representation, must know how highly I have been gratified; for, perhaps, no farce ever excited more genuine laughter, and tumultuous applause, than this has done. I now publish it without the advantage of my friend's revision; but as I act in this, as in all other instances relative to him, with my best judgment, I trust he will approve what I have done, And believe me his

Sincere Friend,
JOHN FAWCETT

Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden,
May 8, 1819.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Mark Chase
Mr. Selborne
Alfred Highflyer
Fixture
Gamekeeper

Mrs. Selborne
Maria Darlington
Mrs. Fixture

A

ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A HALL BELONGING TO SIR MARK CHASE—A CHAMBER DOOR IN THE BACK SCENE: ANOTHER IN THE SIDE SCENE—AN ENTRANCE FAR BACK, THROUGH WHICH IS SEEN A WALL, AND A HOUSE BEYOND FOR LUNATICS.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Selborne, with a post-boy.

Mr. Sel The *horses are* paid for; there's for yourselves.— [*giving money.*

Post-boy. [*dissatisfied*] Your honour, we *galloped* all the way.

Mr. Sel. True; and had you *trotted*, I would have given you *double*—Go! [*exit post-boy*] As I expected—nobody to receive us. The old, faithful domestics are, no doubt, gathered round my poor uncle's death-bed. If the fatal moment have not *passed*, I must find some one to announce me. [*rings the bell*] Nobody to answer.

Mrs. Sel. I hear a carriage stop.

Mr Sel. [*sighing*] The mourning equipage, may be!

Mrs. Sel [*looking out at the hall door*] No; happily it is the carriage of our kind friend, Maria Darlington—true to her appointment!

Selborne runs out, and returns with Maria.

Mrs. Sel A thousand grateful thanks!

Maria. My time to a second! Me voici! [*showing her watch to Mrs Selborne*] My dear Frances! [*salutes her*] How provokingly handsome you look. Nay, don't blush, or there'll be no bearing you! But now, my sweet friends, having accomplished my journey, I hope you'll not think me very unreasonable, if I ask—*why* I have made it?

Mrs Sel Indeed, Maria, it will require all your good nature to pardon the liberty my husband——

Maria. Pardon, nonsense!—Come, Mr. Oedipus, solve your riddle.

Mr. Sel Thus then—my worthy uncle here is dead, or dying.

Maria. Poor sir Mark, I'm very sorry; I flatter myself I was a great favourite of his.

Mr. Sel. He wrote me this letter, which—[*producing a letter*] Oh! here's old Fixture, his favourite Yorkshire servant [*Fixture sings without, "Old King Cole," &c.*] What, *singing! unfeeling scoundrel!* That fellow has fattened on my uncle's bounty these thirty years; and to sing at such a moment is unfeeling indeed.

Enter Fixture, singing.

Fix. [*seeing Selborne*] Ah! my young master, I be mortal glad to see you—you look deadly well.

Mr. Sel. Mortal and *deadly! apt* words I *own*, and befitted to the scene. *Well, Fixture*, my poor uncle—what! he's gone?

Fix. Yes—I wish he had *not;* he'll find it very cold.

Mr. Sel. Cold! [*apart*] True, the grave is cold!

Fix. But he said he should be soon in a fine *glow.*

Mr. Sel. Soon be in a fine glow?

Fix. I suppose you can *guess where* he is gone?

Mr. Sel. Where we *all* hope to go.

Fix. Yes—he's gone a shooting.

Mr. Sel. Shooting! why he wrote me word he was dying.

Fix. Dying!—he! he! Why, lord, sir, he has been dying any day these thirty years—he! he!

Mr. Sel. Indeed!—he! he! I'm rejoiced [*walks.*

Fix. Yes, I see [*two guns are fired*] Bang! bang! That's he!—a brace—down, for a guinea!

Mr. Sel. Why, look here—[*shewing letter*] He sent for me *to close his eyes in death!* [*emphasizing each word.*]

Fix. I don't know about closing his *eyes* in *death;* but I know he seldom closes *one* without it. [*aiming.*

Mr Sel. 'Tis absolute insanity! [*striking the letter with his hand*] *I say*—the next house to this, surrounded by a high wall—(the fellows drove us there by mistake) 'tis an establishment for folks deranged here—[*hitting his forhead*] Is not it?

Fix. Oh, yes!

Mr. Sel. Depend on't, 'tis catching; my uncle's got a touch—I'll be damn'd but its catching!—

[*walks about gesticulating.*

Fix. [*looking at him suspiciously*] Why, I don't know but it is—[*a dog whistle is blown in a long continued note*] That's master—that's for me! what a shortness of breath he has got! he! he! dying, quotha! he! he!—Coming, sir.

Mrs. Fixture. [*without*] Why, Fixture! husband! husband, I say.

Fix. That's my *wife's* whistle; how shrill and 'sneful! *Master* must wait, when *mistress* wants me. —Coming, dearee. [*exit.*

Mr. Sel. Here's a pretty affair! but don't do me the injustice to suppose I'm sorry to hear of my uncle's health. By my soul, I wish the worthy old fellow

every blessing! But I've got into such a scrape—such a dilemma---so, so, so, so- - [*walks about.*

Maria. Don't stammer, and strut about so---but explain.

Mr. Sel. I'll endeavour. You know, Maria, my uncle always wished that you and I should be united, and you know, I——

Maria. Did *not* wish it.

Mr Sel Oh, fie! you shock me—no—no, I was conscious—I—I—did not merit so much ha—ha—happiness—yes, so much happiness; and my dear Frances, not thinking me unworthy her affection, we were———

Maria. Privately married—ye cruel wretches!—ha! ha! ha!

Mr Sel. Don't laugh—'tis really no laughing matter———

Maria. Being married, you know best.

Mr. Sel. Three days ago I received this letter from my uncle; now only read it.

Maria. (*reads*) "Dear Nephew, I find I am approaching my last moments"—

Mr. Sel. Last moments!—That's the gentleman that's shooting—pray go on!

Maria. "I shall leave you my whole fortune, provided you present to me Maria Darlington as your bride." Meaning me! my best courtsey is due for that.—(*curtseys*) "Rely on it, George, look England thro', you'll not find so perfect"—(*tickled with the supposed compliment*)—Oh! dear!—so beautiful"—Oh! I really can't go on.

[*giving the letter to Selborne.*

Mr. Sel. "Not find so perfect, so beautiful a manor for partridges, as she is heiress to"——

Maria. (*with playful spite*) *Partridge!* an old wretch—I'll plague his heart out for this.

Mr. Sel. (*reading*) "If you don't marry her, your legacy, namely, 'a nice *new shilling*,' now lies be-

fore me; the lawyer is in the house, and your answer to this will be his instructions for the last testament of your dying uncle, *Mark Chase*.—P S. If I am *dead* when you arrive, don't be *uncomfortable*—you'll find well-aired linen—Venison that has hung a fortnight—fresh *trout*—the last new novel, and hock quite alive—tho' a year older than your departed uncle." Was there ever such an extraordinary letter? Need I say how *unhappy* it has made me?

Maria And need I say how *hungry* it has made me? Well, and what was your answer?

Mr. Sel. Oh! I replied that I married you yesterday.

Maria *Married me! Partridges*, and all!

Mr. Sel And that, according to his orders, we should be here to-day, and here we are!

Maria. Yes—and here we are! (*imitating*) Well, my dear Hubby, what's next?

[*taking his arm, and hugging it.*

Mr. Sel. I'm sure, Maria, you would have consented to our supposed marriage for a day or two; but, as my uncle is well, the situation will be intolerable!

Mrs. Sel. Oh, *quite intolerable!*

Maria. Ahem!

Mr. Sel. To *you*—of course I mean—intolerable to *you*.

Maria. Of course—ha! ha!—Well—and what's to be done?

Mr. Sel. Run away as fast as we can.

Maria. Run away! I'm glad I an't your wife.

Sir Mark (*without*) My nephew and his bride arrived—set the bells ringing—pile up the bonfires—tap the October.

Maria. Besides, 'tis too late; you hear we have been announced.

Mrs. S. Let us fall at his feet, and implore pardon.

Maria. What, finish the farce in the first scene—

that would, I think, be a pity! Let me consider our characters—you are my husband.

Mr. Sel. Yes. [*sighing.*

Maria. Civil and n[illegible]tural—*I'm* the happy bride; and pray, miss, who are *you?*

Mrs. Sel Who am I?

Maria. Yes, who are you? Be so good as to give an account of yourself.

Mrs. Sel Oh! I'm your bridemaid, madam.

Maria. Very well—now mind *your* part is to do all in your power to *please* the old gentleman—*I* to *torment* him. I'll make myself so disagreeable—

Mr. Sel. That you'll find very difficult.

Maria. There you are *complimenting*—you forget I'm your *wife*—stick to your character, if you please—*your* efforts and *mine* (*to Mrs. S.*) will soon make Sir Mark *wish you had* been his nephew's wife—when he *does so*, then fall at his feet and own it—Hush! he's here!

Enter Sir Mark.

Sir Mark. (*speaking as he enters*) Where are they?—my darlings—my children—my heirs—Oh! George, right welcome to the manor of Warrender! I hope I shall show you some sport. [*laying his gun down.*

Maria. We hope to return the compliment. [*aside.*

Sir Mark. Let me kiss your bride!

Selborne forgetting himself, presents Mrs. Selborne.

Heyday! this——

Mr. Sel. (*with quickness*) No, sir—this—this is Miss Tiverton, sir—the bridemaid, sir—My bride you are already acquainted with—this lady being a stranger, sir——

Sir Mark. (*saluting her*) No longer so. Miss Tiverton, I know your father well. Joy! joy, my Maria! (*hugs her*) Ay, now all my wishes are ac

complished—and I have now only to pull off my shooting gaiters, and lay me down and die

Mr. Sel. Your letter alarmed me exceedingly—But you are not—

Sir Mark. Quite dead—no, George, not quite.

Mr. Sel. And how is your health, sir?

Sir Mark. Bad, very bad—the least thing fatigues me.

Mrs Sel. Pray, be seated, sir

Sir Mark. Thank you, my pretty love (*chucking her under the chin*) I seldom sit down but at meals.

Mr Sel. How far may you have walked to-day?

Sir Mark. (*shaking his head and speaking plaintively*) About eighteen miles, not a yard more!

Maria. Indeed! and the *fatigue* has made you faint.

Sir Mark. No, I feel faint from *hunger*, my dear.

Mr Sel. Your appetite, then, is pretty good?

Sir Mark. Yes, I eat well, and I drink well, and I sleep well—but that's all.

All. Poor man!

Sir Mark. But let's be merry, while we may—Egad! we'll have a day on't? Let's dress for dinner; there, George—there's the room I've prepared for you and your wife—this, Miss Tiverton, shall be yours—get you in—get you in!

Maria. (*embarrassed*) I wish to be with my friend.

Mrs Sel. Yes, sir she wishes to be with me

Sir Mark. Nonsense! Oh, George, you know better than that—there, go along with you, and help your wife to dress—What are you shilly-shallying about?—Why don't you go?

Maria. We're going, sir,—yes, sir, we're going.

Sir Mark. Well, then, go, sir—for I've a thousand things to do.

[*He pushes Selborne and Miss Darlington into the room at the back, Mrs Selborne exit into hers.*

(*faintly*) Oh dear! oh dear! How the least thing

shakes my poor weak frame, my pulse is low, and I feel ready to faint—I must try to support exhausted nature as well as I can. (*in the voice of Stentor*] Fixture! put the venison pasty on the side-table, and a tankard of ale—I can touch nothing else before dinner. [*exit.*

[*Selborne leaves the room he entered on tip-toe, and goes to his wife's apartment, taps at the door, and listens.*

Re-enter Sir Mark.

Sir Mark. I forgot my gun—Eh! what's George about? [*steps aside.*

Sel. [*taps again*] Fanny! Fanny!

Sir Mark. Oh! oh! I suspect poaching here. [*apart.*

Mrs. Sel. (*from the room*) Who's there.

Sel. 'Tis I.

Enter Mrs. Selborne.

Mrs. Sel. My dear George!

Sel. My sweet Fanny—I may not have another opportunity of telling you, that I shall contrive to deceive the old boy, and in the evening come secretly to your apartment.

Mrs. Sel. (*fondly pouting*) But I don't like your being with your *wife* there, I assure you.

Sel. My soul! can you doubt 'tis you alone I adore? Let this embrace——

Sir Mark. Ahem! [*advances.*

Sel. My uncle! undone!

Sir Mark. Oh! you profligate! Oh! you—what only two days married? Oh! you Don Juan! I'll expose you to your injured wife. Maria, Mrs. Selborne! [*call at the door.*

Enter Maria.

Maria. What's the matter?

Sir Mark. The matter is—I caught your bride-

groom in your bridemaid's arms, planning an assignation—and sorry I am to shock you, my dear, with such heart-breaking intelligence.

Maria. Oh, fie, George! I'm ashamed of you—you naughty man—you naughty man!

[*playfully slapping his hands, which he returns.*

Sir Mark. (*imitating*) "You naughty man!" The world's at an end—Oh! this is my precious match.

Mrs. Sel. What an indelicate situation I am placed in. [*hides her face.*

Sir Mark. Ah! Miss Tiverton, you have some modesty, and, I hope, my dear child, my interference has been opportune enough to save you from the arts of a libertine—from the seductions of that "naughty man." (*imitating*) Don't weep, he shan't annoy you again—we'll dine by *ourselves*, and hob and nob together. [*taking her arm.*

Sel. Hob and nob! sir, I——

Sir Mark Keep off, sir! (*to Mrs. Sel.*) and to-morrow morning, my love, I'll take you home to your friends—Fixture.

Sel. (*in agony*) Then I shall lose my wife.

[*aside to Maria.*

Maria. Be quiet!

Enter Fixture.

Sir Mark. Run to the Talbot, and order post-horses to be here at day-light, and furbish up the old coach.

Fix. Sir, the turkey hen is hatching a brood of chicks in it.

Sir Mark. Out with her! (*exit Fixture*) Come, we'll take a walk in the garden, and you shall never see him again—there now! (*Selborne can hardly be restrained by Maria*) And to-night you shall sleep in

a room where nobody can come to you, but old Deborah, the housekeeper—there now !

[*exeunt Sir Mark and Mrs. Selborne, he patting and kissing her hand*

Sel. Sleep where nobody can come to her but old Deborah—Curse old Deborah ! and, to-morrow he takes her to her offended family, and I shall see her no more. I'll go and own my marriage

Maria. (*stopping him*) And triumphantly march off with your new shilling ! no, that will never do. Have we not all day to counterplot ? (*going to the window*) Ha ! ha ! how lovingly they walk together ! George, come here—Quick ! quick ! whose equipage is that passing the gates— there—see !

Sel. Oh ! I know—'tis—'tis—pshaw ! Oh ! the hon. Mr Highflyer.

Maria. I thought so—then this is no place for *me* —I suppose he's coming here—therefore I go—

Sel. Coming here ! no such thing ! neither my uncle nor I are acquainted with him. His place is near Newmarket, far away from—

Maria. Newmarket—Yes, yes, I know.

[*peevishly.*

Sel. Have you had a little quarrel lately ?

Maria. Lately ! Sir, I fortunately have not seen that gentleman for eleven months and seventeen days, for I have counted them ; I own I was at first a little uneasy at our breaking off, but time has, as you see, entirely removed both regret and resentment.—Obstinate wretch !

Sel. Oh ! I see it has.

Maria I now make it a rule never to talk about him—never—could you believe this of him, Mr Selborne ?—I had perfected myself *à merveille* in a piece of music of his recommendation—had the concert fixed—sent him a card—Instead of his presence I was honoured with a letter from Newmarket—shocked —*en desespoir*, and a parcel of trash that he could not

be present—but that business must be minded—returned his letter in a blank cover—he wrote another—I returned it—another, I returned that—and would you think it possible—he wrote no more.

Sel. Tho' you had only sent back three letters.

Maria Only three!

Sel. And have you not sought a reconciliation?

Maria Reconciliation, sir!—Rivers may climb mountains—doves become the nestlings of kites—man become faithful—any monstrous thing is more probable than that I should be reconciled to Alfred!

Sel (*apart*) I wish I had an opportunity to try that—I see she loves him.

Enter Fixture, with a card in one hand, and a guinea in the other.

Fix. (*looking at the guinea*) Very much of a gentleman indeed.—Sir, would you believe it—I've been at the public house, and——

Sel. I can very easily believe it.

Fix There's a great stranger come—a mortal sensible man.

Sel. How do you know that?

Fix He gave me a guinea—Says he—"I wish to examine the inside of the interior of that wise insane establishment"—next door, you know, sir; master's a governor, thinks I—so, I'll get a ticket for *him*—and mayhap, another guinea for myself (*reading the card*) The hon Alfred Highflyer—

[*walking slowly out, and looking alternately at card and guinea.*

Maria. (*overlooking*) "Of Racket Hall"—'tis my detestable lover—who is—

Fix Very much of a gentleman indeed! [*exit*

Maria I won't stay

Sel. He's not coming here—so, why agitate yourself?

Maria Agitate myself! ridiculous? To prove I'm

not concerned about him, I shall go and amuse myself at the window. [*exit.*

Sel. For the chance of seeing him-—They shall meet, that's fixed—Eh! I have it—Fixture, come back—I want you—Come back, I say!

[*Maria appears at the door.*

Maria. Come back! what can Selborne want with him—thank heaven, I've no curiosity—only one may as well listen.

Sel. Ha, ha! 'tis a bold thought, but I owe Maria a good turn, so here goes!

Enter Fixture.

Come hither! I'll tell you, my old boy, how you may make that *one* guinea *five.* [*taking out his purse.*

Fix. By coining—?

Sel Only a little *falsehood*, my old friend. You must assist my plans, and share my confidence —— Know then I am married to Miss Tiverton; but, fearing sir Mark's disinheriting threats, have deceived him by a pretended alliance with his favourite, Miss Darlington.—*That Mr. Highflyer* is her lover. (*pointing to the card*) They have quarrelled, and I wish to bring about a meeting; therefore, instead of taking him to the next house, you shall introduce him to *this*, as the Lunatic Asylum, and to *me*, as the managing *director!*

Fix. This house as the lunatic—He, he! Oh, you're joking!

Sel. If you *think* so, I'll put my purse in my pocket.

Fix. No don't—there would be *no joke* in that.

Sel. The governor's compliments to Mr. Highflyer—shall be happy in receiving the honour of his visit—you hear?

Fix. Tolerably.

Sel. (*chinking the purse*) You understand?

Fix. Perfectly!—I'm to say this is a lunacy house—Egod! it is not very unlike one.

Sel. Mind you repeat—

Fix. Never fear—I'll repeat all the lies you've told me, you may depend on't—Ha, ha!—The governor's compliments,— [*exit, repeating his lesson, behind.*

Maria. (*advances*) Upon my word, a very pretty scheme! and I am, I suppose, to be out of my senses—I must be so to join mit!

Enter Sir Mark and Mrs. Selborne, from behind.

Sel. Nay, but Maria—now hear me—ought you to be angry—here am I taking pains to bring a lover to your feet, and you are not satisfied.

Sir Mark. How unreasonable!—Well said, husband!

Maria You are very kind, sir—but I am vain enough to think I can provide lovers for myself.

Sir Mark. I dare say you can!—Well said, wife! (*advancing*) What will this world come to!

Sel. What the devil shall I do now?

Maria. Do!—why run away with your wife, to be sure. [*exit taking his arm.*

Mrs. S. Oh, George! run away with your wife. [*going to follow them.*

Sir Mark. (*getting hold of her*) No, no, Miss Tiverton, you shall have nothing to say to the profligate!—go into that room till I find my old housekeeper! (*puts her into room*) They are all out of their senses!—To be sure this union I promised to Maria Darlington's departed father, poor Charles, when we were younkers!—Ha, ha!—well, well! youth and age have both their tantarums!

SONG—SIR MARK.

Love in season,
Like teazing,
Is pleasing,
Not teasing;

It prickles,
And tickles,
With fanciful joys.
While toying,
Enjoying,
She cries out,
And sighs out—
"You devil,
Be civil,
And don't make a noise!"
Their pressing,
Caressing,
And ranting,
And chanting,
They rhyme away,
Time away,
In a love song;
Then dance it,
And prance it,
And thump it,
And stump it,
And bump it,
And rump it,
All the night long!
Love in season, &c.

Youth over,
In clover,
We muzzle,
And guzzle,
And toast it,
And roast it,
Like jolly old boys!
Break glasses,
Kiss lasses,
And pick up,
And hiccup

And swaggering,
Staggering,
Finish our joys
Then phthisic,
And physic,
Blue devils
Us levels,
Till doctor
And proctor
Be-peak us a grave
Then weepers,
And peepers,
And moaners,
And groaners,
And gay men
Cry "Amen!"
And chaunt out a stave!
Youth over, &c. [Exit

SCENE II.—A PLEASURE GROUND: AN ANGLE OF THE SCENE DISPLAYS A HANDSOME AVIARY, WITH A MACAW AND OTHER BIRDS—THE AVIARY FRONTED WITH BRASS WIRE-WORK, AND PARTIALLY CONCEALED BY FLOWERING SHRUBS——THE REST OF THE SCENE ARRANGED IN A TASTEFUL DISPLAY OF WOOD, WATER, AND THE AGREMENS THAT FORM A HANDSOME DOMAIN.

Enter Maria and Selborne.

Maria. And do you think I will ever be *reconciled* to Alfred?

Sel. Certainly I do. (*aside*)—Certainly I do not!—If I thought so I would prevent your meeting—my object is to punish him, and bring him to your feet.

Maria. Yes, I own I should like to see him at my feet.

Sel. And then to consign him to utter despair!

Maria. Yes, to utter despair—Well then, I consent to see him.

Sel. Throw your hair into a little disorder—and that, with a veil, will do very well for a desponding witless maiden—and when I clap my hands three times thus, (*clapping his hands*) then begin a mad Bess kind of air—he's coming!

Maria. (*lifting herself on her toes*) I would rather not see him.

Sel. I know that—but go, and mind the signal.

Maria. (*on her toes*) I think I ought to be sure 'tis he.

Sel. There can be no doubt of it—there are not two such.

Maria. (*with earnest affection*) No—that there are not.

Sel Then don't let curiosity mar our plan.

Maria. I've no curiosity, I assure you

[*exit, raising herself and looking for Alfred.*

Sel. Poor Maria! how she detests him, ha, ha!—he's here—now for my assumed character of director

[*retires up the stage.*

Enter Fixture, introducing Alfred

Fix. This way, sir, I can show you all the grounds.

Alf. A noble mansion—strong and capacious—and the grounds handsome and varied. I understand they practise here the soothing system, with their unhappy patients—which is certainly the most humane, if not the most sanative plan.

Fix. (*pointing to Sel.*) My master, sir.

Alf. Oh! rather young!

Sel. (*apart to Fixture*) Keep my uncle out of the way. (*aloud*) You need not wait.—(*to Alf.*) A careful steady servant, sir, and seldom forgets any thing.

Fix. The five guineas for instance. [*aside to Sel.*

Sel. There, confound you! (*gives purse to Fix.*) The object of your visit reflects the highest honour on your humanity, and patriotism.

Alf. Yes, sir, disgusted with the insane creation, that take the privilege of roaming about this world, I wish to devote my time and wealth to those unfortunates, who are under salutary control.

Sel. I regret I cannot consistently with the rules of this establishment, admit you at this hour into the interior.

Alf. I beg you will not infract any regulation on my account.

Sel. Many of the patients enjoy the salubrity of the garden, and, perhaps, the grounds may afford you some amusement. Favour me with your company.

[*exeunt Selborne and Alfred.*

Enter Mrs Fixture.

Fix. I must keep the secret safe from my wife She has a ravenous curiosity, and particularly about young men.

Mrs F. I a curiosity about young men! If I had, I should not have been content with such a curiosity of an old one—No, sir, I defy your words—so, tell me directly who the young man is, that you so falsely say, I've a curiosity about?

Fix. Well, I will—he's a Mr. Highflyer, a dasher on the turf.

Mrs. F Keeps race-horses? Oh, how I do love Taunton races.

Fix. Oh, those cursed Taunton races! you never cleared up your privately going—

Mrs F Don't trouble your head about it, my dear.

Fix But, my dear, it does trouble my head,—I never think of it, but I feel such shooting pains—

Mrs. F Who are those? I'm sure, that's the young dasher, in green.

Fix. As she deceived me about Taunton races, I'll deceive her—No, he in green is sir Mark's nephew, Mr. Selborne, a sensible discreet married man, like me. Come away, I say,—look! here's a pretty pre-

sent (*showing a purse*) and I'll tell you a great secret —so, come away. [*exeunt Mr. and Mrs Fixture.*

Re-enter Selborne and Alfred.

Sel. So, sir, you have quarrelled with the world — you are a young misanthrope.

Alf Yes, sir, as Hamlet says, man delights not me—nor woman neither—woman! Oh! (*spitefully*) sir, I don't mean to annoy you with the lacerations of my wounded spirit—but—woman! Oh! (*recovering*) I really ask your pardon—I pray, sir, what do you consider the most effective agent in soothing the irritation of the mind

Sel Music;—but, perhaps, you are not an admirer?

Alf. Sir, to music I owe all my happiness; all my misery I love it to distraction.

Sel. Distraction! Ah, sir, I have under my care an angel; oh, such a voice! (*clapping his hands*) Oh! such a voice! (*clapping his hands*) Oh! such a voice! (*clapping again*)

[*Maria sings the burthen of a song.*]

That's she!

Alf Her voice recalls——

Sel. Hush!

SONG—MARIA.

Hush thy vain sighs, fair maiden,
Tears, flow no more in vain,
Heart, cease thy fond upbraiding,
Lips, no more breathe his name.
" He's gone! ay, gone forever
Far, far away from me,
Fond maidens then endeavour
To shun credulity!"

Alf. That song I well remember—it caused my quarrel with Maria. (*to Selborne*) And has reason

ded that form, which breathes such enchanting melody?

Sel. Alas! 'tis even so—poor Maria!

Alf. Maria, did he say?—May I, sir, presume to ask the name of the lovely sufferer?

Sel. Maria Darlington

Alf. Honor! let me conceal my agitation! Oh! where's my resentment now? Know you the cause of her malady?

Sel Unrequited love.

Alf. I the cause! I the destroyer of the proudest spirit that heaven ever breathed into a human form! —Might I be permitted to speak—[*Selborne shakes his head*] Only to look on her?

Sel. *That* may be permitted—you see that bubbling brook [*points off*] its murmurs often invite her to wander near its margin—there we may look on her, and join our petitions for her recovery, and our *curses* on the *wretch*, who could desolate such a paradise of sweets.

Alf. Yes, as you say, sir, curses on the wretch—[*embarrassed*] that—you are very good, sir—Come!

Sir Mark. [*without*] Why George! nephew!

Sel. Zounds! my uncle! what the devil shall I do now? he must not see me.

Alf. Who is that, sir?

Sel. An unhappy gentleman, resident here, you understand [*pointing to his head*] harmless—perfectly harmless—fancies himself proprietor of this house and manor—you see he's in a shooting costume—and we indulge him with a little unloaded pop-gun—seem to fall into his fancies—'tis our plan of treatment.

Alf Rely on me But that angel——

Sel. I'll lead her to yon weeping willow,—[*sir Mark sings without*] Zounds! he's here! [*sir Mark sings louder*] Don't be alarmed, he is quite harmless.

[*exit.*

Alf How unfit to humour the insanities of others,

while I am scarcely on the verge of sanity myself.—Oh! Maria!

Enter sir Mark, with his gun, calling to one of his dogs—Doll—Doll—Doll, very loud.

Sir Mark. This precious nephew of mine has thrown me into such a fever, I can't stay in the house. I must just brush the home covers to cool and tranquillize my poor nerves—Eh! what strange gentleman have we here? [*Alfred nods*] Strange gentleman! no—he seems a very familiar one.—Your servant, sir—Pray, sir, to what may I attribute the honour of your presence in my grounds?

Alf. *My* grounds! poor fellow, I must indulge him. Sir, the beautiful disposition of hill, dale, wood, and water, has tempted me to intrude.

Sir Mark. Intrude! sir, you are welcome—your hand ——

Alf. My hand—(*hesitates*) Oh! he's harmless. (*shaking hands*) Sir, the charms of the scenery joined to your good manners—

Sir Mark. Sir, I flatter myself my manors are as good as any gentleman's in the county; though last winter I had the misfortune to lose all my hares.

Alf. (*aside, sighing*] Had his head shaved, poor fellow!

Sir Mark. So, sir, if you're fond of sport, this is the place.

Alf. [*aside*] The place for sport—melancholy idea!

Sir Mark. What do you think of this piece?

[*giving him his gun.*

Alf. Very handsome!

Sir Mark. And generally fatal; should you like to take a shot this morning?

Alf. If you please, sir. I must humour him. [*aside*] Egad, I'll pretend to kill that Macaw

Sir Mark. I suppose you are pretty sure?

Alf. You shall see. [*aside.*

[*fires—the macaw drops from the perch.*

Zounds! 'tis loaded!

Sir Mark. Damn the fellow, he has killed my macaw!

Alf. To trust a loaded gun in such hands was madness!

Sir Mark. It was indeed: so give it me instantly.

Alf. It has another barrel; I shall be shot here!—I won't give it you

Sir Mark. Not give me my gun! Why, you damn'd impudent scoundrel!

Alf Be quiet—be quiet—you know you have keepers here

Sir Mark. Keepers! to be sure I have.

Alf [*aside*] Come, he's not so mad, but he knows he has keepers! Be composed, or I'll call them

Sir Mark [*furious*] You call my keepers—you!

Alf Oh! I must, I see—here, keepers, do your duty. [*exit.*

Sir Mark He's gone off with my gun! Here, Bob! Thomas! Gregory! Fixture!—Stop that fellow with my gun.

Enter Selborne, game keepers, and servants.

Sel My dear Sir Mark, what's the matter?

Sir Mark. That damn'd swaggering rascal has killed my macaw, and marched off with my gun!

Sel [*stifling a laugh*] A stranger make such a disturbance What could he aim at?

Sir Mark Why, at my macaw, I tell you!

Sel. Sir, I shall instantly demand of him an account of his conduct

Sir Mark. Do, George.

Enter Fixture.

Fix. Here's your worship's gun. [*apart to Sel.*] What a pretty commence!—[*aloud*] but, I can't find the gentleman

Sel. But *I'll* find him—at least, I hope so [*aside.*

Sir Mark. Do But, George, where's your wife?

Sel. That's a good question?—Why, sir, did not you take her away from me? Did not—

Sir Mark I take—why, zounds, you're thinking of Miss Tiverton again!

Sel No, sir!—yes, sir—no, sir—yes, sir——

Sir Mark. No, sir—yes, sir—you'll drive me mad, sir.

Sel. Sir!—

Sir Mark. I won't hear a word, sir—leave my presence, you profligate, or I'll— [*exit Sel.*

Was there ever such a Tarquin—a Blue-beard? And was ever poor gentleman brought to such an untimely grave? Ah! they'll soon have their will—now I have made mine Bob! here, load my gun—and just to raise my spirits, let's have a jolly song and chorus, my old boy! (*slapping Fixture on the back*) and then for the merry spaniels!

SONG AND CHORUS.

When the southern breezes play—
The uplands let us gain,
Where ruddy health with smiles invites.
To join her sporting train!

CHORUS.

When the southern, &c.

SOLO.

Unleach the merry pack—
See—see—they scent the gale
Their chuckling throats
Repeat the notes,
Our sport it will not fail!
When the sun his course has run,
We trim the evening fire.

And gaily troll
The cheering bowl
To the health of wife and 'squire'
Then the song and joke prevail,
Till the turret-bell strikes—one!
And the parting cup of ale
Proclaims our day is done!
When the southern, &c

CHORUS.

When the southern, &c.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

ONE HALF OF THE STAGE IS EMPLOYED IN DISPLAYING A DEEP SHADED GROVE—A MARBLE URN IS SEEN NEAR THE BANKS OF A RIVER—IN THE FRONT IS A WEEPING WILLOW—THE OTHER HALF OF THE STAGE SHOWS THE BOUNDARIES OF A PARK, AND AN EXTENSIVE COUNTRY BEYOND IT.

Enter Alfred.

Alf There is the brook poor Maria augments with her tears—here, the willow she ruffles with her sighs—there dwell the echoes that correspond to her plaintive minstrelsy—and this is thy work, thou unfeeling, but too bewitching man.—I really had no idea that my person and manners would have been so fatal. In future I shall mind what I'm about, and by an acrid

severity, neutralize the horrid poison of this foolish tongue, and prevent further mischief to the soft, fond, believing sex

Enter Selborne, motioning to Maria

Well, sir, where is she?

Sel. You may observe her in that grove.

Alf. I don't see--Yes, there I caught a glimpse how my heart beats!

Sel. Sing to her, that will attract her

Alf. Sing! sir, 'tis with shame and sorrow I own, that I can't sing

Sel. Not sing! poor man, I pity you.

Alf. Thank you, sir--I have done mischief enough without singing - Oh! if I could have sung——

Sel. See! she advances.

[*Maria walks down the grove, and seats herself under the willow.*

Maria. Alfred!

Sel. That's the name she always pronounces.

Alf. I don't wonder at it! 'tis a very pretty name--Maria!

Sel. Hush!

Alf. (*aparl*) He won't let me speak to her—I wish I could get rid of him

Enter Fixture.

Fix. Sir, your uncle is asking—

[*to Selborne, who stops his mouth*

Alf. (*to Fix.*) Get your master away, and there's another guinea

Sel. How provoking, that my presence should be required elsewhere-- I'm very sorry——

Alf. So am I, sir; but business, you know, sir--

[*shouldering him.*

Fix. [*pulling his coat*] Yes, business, sir—

Sel. 'Tis unlucky!

Alf. Very true; but, in your situation, ceremony would be highly improper [*pushing him*

Fix. Oh! very improper! *[pulling him by the coat.*

[exeunt Sel and Fix

Maria. Heigho!

Alf. She sighs, and parts the branches of the weeping willow, with her long interesting melancholy fingers

Maria (advancing) Alfred!

Alf. Again, my name!

Maria. What proofs did I not give you of my love? Did I not engross your time, exhaust your patience —did I not prefer tormenting you to any other of your sex?

Alf Kind soul! she did!

Maria. And what was my return?—You smiled in my absence—went to sleep in my presence—preferred the spring meeting at the course of *New* market, to meeting with me in the theatre of the *Haymarket*

Alf I was that wretch

Maria. And while my heart fluttered with the hope that you were arranging our marriage with Mr. Buckle, the proctor, you were settling a race with Mr Buckle, the jockey—then I lost my senses.

Alf And I, my match—I'll venture to speak to her —Maria!

Maria. Who calls Maria?

Alf One who loves her. Have you forgotten Alfred?

Maria. Oh, no; but he forsook me: yet even then when rivals asked my hand, my heart—at the concert—in the waltz—mark how I answered them

SONG—MARIA.

When harmony awakens each bosom to joy,
Say, artful lovers those moments employ
In dulcet notes sighing,
In cadences dying,

Each whispers, "Ah! can you these raptures destroy?"
I only reply—la, le, lal, &c. [*sings*

The maze of the waltz to the lover has charms,
It animates hope, it prudence disarms—
Pursuing, then pressing,
Encircling, caressing,
He sighs—"Ah! for ever repose in these arms"—
I only reply—la, le, lal, &c [*dances*
[*After the song, she sinks into a jection*

Alf. How she waltzes! What an invaluable wife I have lost! [*addresses her*] But if Maria remembered Alfred, she would look kindly on him.

Maria. (*smiling*) Does she now look angry?

Alf. She would offer Alfred her hand.

Maria. Does she now refuse it?

[*she takes her hand*

Alf. She would find an asylum in his arms

[*she sinks into his arms*

Enter Sir Mark

Sir Mark. In a gallant's arms! Mercy on us! mercy on us! Ay, you may well hide your face

[*Maria faintly shrieks, covers her face with her veil, and runs off.*

Alf. Confound this vexatious, unfortunate!—and at such a moment. Yet what can I say to him. (*in a pathetic tone*) Why, unhappy old gentleman, will *you intrude* yourself?

Sir Mark (*in the same tone*) Why, impertinent young jackanapes, will you intrude yourself?

Alf (*irritated*) 'Sdeath! you have wounded my feelings

Sir Mark (*with the same irritation*) 'Sdeath, sir, you have killed my macaw. Who the devil *are* you, and how dare you take freedoms with a married lady?

Alf. (*apart*) Married! Maria married! But I must

not irritate him; I must pursue the soothing system. Hush! be quiet; you'll bring on a fever.

Sir Mark (*alarmed*) The fever! shall I? Oh dear! I hope not.

Alf. How he looks—'tis quite affecting to see such a desolation.

Sir Mark Do I look ill?

Alf. I pronounce him incurable.

Sir Mark. Incurable! I hope not. Don't shake your head—they tell me here I am getting better.

Alf. (*sighs and smiles*) Ay, I dare say they do.

Sir Mark. I've had a consultation of London doctors.

Alf No doubt, no doubt

Sir Mark. (*fumbling for a letter which he produces*) You see they give me hopes—look, pray look! (*gives the letter to Alfred, and begins counting his pulse rapidly*) One, two, three, four, five six, &c

Alf What's this! "To sir Mark Chase, Warrender Hall—free—Alfred Highflyer." My own frank! Warrender Hall! (*looks about*)—Sir! (*with energy*)

Sir Mark. (*alarmed*) What's the matter?

Alf. Warrender Hall! it must be so. Sir, I am compelled to ask a delicate question—but the asylum for—(*touching his head*)

Sir Mark. I know what you mean—'tis the very next house—here, you may see the high wall.

Alf. (*jumps up*) I see the high wall—*that's* the house I ought to have been taken to

Sir Mark Yes, I rather think it is—Oh! this accounts for his killing my macaw. [*a lute is heard.*

Alf. A harp! Ay, ay, they are following up their sport; but if I don't mar it—(*to Sir Mark*) I'll pretend to be deceived—I'll turn the tables on them Egad! I'll give them a Roland for their Oliver.—Hark! what heavenly music! It comes from the azure canopy of

Sir Mark. (*soothing him*) No, no, it comes from the blue parlour

Alf. 'Tis the muse, Uuterpe

Sir Mark. No, 'tis Fanny Tiverton.

Alf It whispers, 'tis a celestial lyre.

Sir Mark. 'Tis an infernal liar, if it whispers any such thing, because—

Alf Divine music! What threw down the walls of Jericho? Music! What, drew Eurydice from the shades? Music! How did Apollo build the Theban Wall? By music!

Sir Mark. (*to himself*) Music, quotha! I wonder what tune Apollo fiddled when he turned mason!

Alf. What tune? Stoneybatter—Tol de rol—

[*dances up the stage.*

Sir Mark 'Tis a clear case; I'll steal away and give information at the next door to secure him.

[*exit.*

Alf. Now, if I can find my *grooms*, and give them their *cue.* (*going, sees*) I shall be revenged on them all, for the trick they have played me

Mrs. Fixture, who enters.

Mrs. F. Well—I've got the secret from my husband at last. Oh! here's the gentleman in the green coat—Pity such a handsome man [illegible] Selborne should be married—I hope your [illegible]'s well, and your spouse. [*curtsies.*

Alf. (*aside*) Spouse!

Mrs F. Yes, Mr. Selborne, your *real* spouse.

Alf. Selborne! real spouse! [*aside.*

Mrs. F. Ah! you are surprised at my knowing the secret! but my husband has told me all.

Alf Your husband?

Mrs. F. Is Fixture, the butler—don't be angry with him for telling me.

Alf. Not at all, on the contrary, I'm quite de[illegible] [illegible]

Mrs. F. I say! what a trick you played that Mr. Highflyer—how like a fool he must look, ha, ha!

Alf. I dare say he does, ha, ha! [*aside*] Remarkably pleasant this.

Mrs. F. And has sir Mark no suspicion of the trick you played *him*.

Alf. Oh! of the trick we played Sir Mark? Oh, no: and so your husband told you all—what all about—eh?—

Mrs. F. Yes, all about your private marriage with Miss Tiverton, and pretending to Sir Mark, you had married Miss Darlington, and—

Alf. What do I hear! (*aside*) Maria unmarried! I shall betray myself—What a lucky fellow Fixture is, to have so discreet, and yet so blooming, and bewitching a wife!

Mrs. F. (*simpering and curtseying*) Oh, dear sir! but he's so jealous——

Alf. 'Tis always the case—those husbands are sure to be most jealous, whose wives give them the least reason— [*he puts his arm round her waist, and toys with her hand.*

Mrs F. Very true, sir.

Alf. They are sure to misconstrue the most innocent freedoms. [*kisses her.*

Mrs. F. So they do, sir—now, I only went to Taunton races with a friend, and he has made such a worret ever since, to find out who it was.

Alf. Taunton races!—there's a rod in pickle for Mr. Fixture, who introduced me to this labyrinth of riddles. [*aside.*

Mrs. F. Here comes my old man—pray, don't say a word about the secret, or the races. [*exit.*

Alf. Oh, no!—

Enter Fixture.

Fix. (*placing his hand above his eyes to assist his sight*) Why yes—it is her!

Alf. (*kissing his hand to her*) Good bye, you sly rogue—I shall see you again at Taunton races.

Fix. Taunton races! (*with solemn trepidation*)—What do you know of Taunton races?

Alf. That my *Filly* bolted, and—

Fix. Don't talk bi *your* bolting filly, but tell me about mine. What do you know of that young person?

Alf. Don't be agitated, there's no cause for alarm—I certainly had the pleasure of seeing her there; but she was under the protection of an elderly gentleman.

Fix. (*breathless*) Who?

Alf. A sir Mark Chase, as I under-stood.

Fix. My master! oh, the hoary villain!

Alf. Therefore, your daughter—

Fix. Daughter! she's my wife! (*in agony*) If there be poison—or, what's more deadly—law, in the land, I'll——(*rushes out.*)

Alf. Ha, ha! here comes the seducer—ha, ha!—I must avoid him, and give my grooms their instructions—I'll teach them to make me the victim of their plots. [*exit.*

Enter Sir Mark.

Sir Mark. I've procured two persons to secure him; but, where has the poor creature wandered?

Enter Mrs. Fixture.

Mrs. Fix. I saw my old man *scuttling* along!

Sir Mark. Hannah! Have you seen Mr. Highflyer?

Mrs. F. No, sir, but I've seen Mr. *Selborne*—What a fine, easy, graceless gentleman!

Sir Mark. Very!

Mrs F. But, I've a notion he's a wild one; he began rumpling me about.

Sir Mark. Rumpling her about! was there ever such a devil of a fellow!

Enter Fixture, behind, starts at seeing them.

You must not listen to these young fellows—Fixture is disposed to be jealous,—therefore, my dear Hannah, be prudent, and you know, I'll always be your friend.

[*chucks her under the chin*

Fixture, with dishevelled hair, and ghastly look, rushes in between them.

Fix. I dare say you will

Sir Mark. Fixture! what's the matter with the man?

Mrs. Fix. He seems in pain—where's your complaint?

Fix. In my head, in my heart—Taunton races!—Oh, you young viper!—oh, you old dragon!

Sir Mark. Old dragon! I see how it is—every soul in my family have lost their senses—and I shall soon be in the family way myself

Fix. Oh, you old poacher! There's your service—(*snapping his fingers*)—there's your livery—(*throwing it off*)—there's your baggage—(*handing his wife over to Sir Mark*)—I'll have law, and poison—an attorney, and an apothecary. [*rushes out.*

Sir Mark. Baggage!—old poacher!—no constitution can stand this! [*faintly.*

Mrs F. Oh, dear! oh, dear!

Sir Mark. (*angry*) What's the matter *with* you?

Mrs F. Indeed I'm innocent of all such naughty doings, and I dare say, so are you, sir; at least, I'm sure you look innocent

Sir Mark. Nonsense! now must I be tormented with her mewling [*Mrs. Fixture sobs violently.*

Zounds! don't go into a fit.

[*runs and supports her in his arms.*

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Selborne and Maria.

Come, come, don't take it so to heart, and I'll try to

persuade Fixture, that he has no cause to be jealous of us—There, there!

Mr. and Mrs Selborne and Maria, advance round Sir Mark.

Sel. The world's at an end!

Maria. Oh, you naughty man, you naughty man! ha, ha!

Sir Mark Confound you all! What do you mean? Go along, you hussy! [*exit Mrs. Fixture.*

Maria. Oh, Sir Mark!

Sel Oh, uncle!

Sir Mark. Oh, nephew! you think by this ridiculous laugh to cover your own profligacy—she says you have been *rumpling* her about—she charges you with taking improper liberties.

Mrs. S. (*apart to Sel*) Is that true, George?

Sel. [*to her*] Upon my soul, I never saw her till this moment, I solemnly assure you, my dear Fanny

[*they go up the stage, disputing.*

Maria. But now to find Alfred, and clear the mystery to him. I assure you, Sir Mark, your seeing Mr. Highflyer at my feet was the most innocent jest——

Sir Mark. I dare say it was, [*incredulously*] but, poor fellow, he's past jesting with now.

Maria. What do you mean?

Sir Mark. Mean! that he's gone—

Sel. Gone!

Sir Mark. Out of his senses.

Sel. Ha, ha!

Sir Mark Come, come, 'tis no laughing matter—The poor creature owned he ought to have been taken to the next house—and when I told him you were married——

Maria. You told him I was married?

Sir Mark. To be sure.

Maria. Ay, then he stormed—

Sir Mark. No, he did not; he began dancing to the tune of Stoneybatter.

Maria Dancing! then he is lost indeed.

Sel. Don't be alarmed—'tis some mistake of Sir Mark's.

Enter two grooms, running.

1*st groom.* You run that way, Sam—Stop—I've got him. [*clasping Selborne*

Sel (*shaking him off*) What, in the devil's name, are you about?

1*st groom.* Beg ten thousand pardons, sir—Oh, my poor master!—Ladies, you have not got him about you?

Maria. What do you mean? what master?

1*st groom.* Mr Highflyer, ma'am.

Maria. What of him?

1*st groom.* Escap'd, ma'am.

Maria Escaped!

Sir Mark. Did not I say so?

1*st groom.* Yes, ma'am, escaped from us, ma'am, and he gave us the slip, ma'am.—He'll do some mischief! eh, my poor—eh! there he is—I see him—follow. [*exeunt grooms.*

Sir Mark. There, did I not tell you? (*a great noise of breaking glass*) Confound him! he has got into the greenhouse—Here, gardener—Fixture, Gregory!

Sel. Courage, Maria!

Maria. I shall never recover the shock, to assume derangement—to—an unfortunate, that was its victim.—Dreadful idea! Oh! Alfred, and have I only found you faithful to lose you for ever!

Sel. Nay, I alone was to blame; let us seek him.

Maria Music had always the greatest power over him. Sing, my dear Frances, try, by its influence to attract him hither. Come, sir,—poor lost Alfred! [*exeunt*

Enter Alfred, his dress a little deranged.

Alf. Ha, ha! I have escaped the baronet,—now, if I can find the bride, I'll give Mr. Selborne a pleasant half hour.—Who have we here? by heavens, a Hebe! [*exit.*

SONG—MRS. SELBORNE

Sweet soothing lyre,
Thy mystic power prevailing,
And my weak song,
To calm the troubled breast
Lull by thy strains—
The anguish'd heart,
Hush by thy spell,
The troubled soul to rest.
Ah, pleasing power,
Hush every grove;
And harmonize the soul
To peace and love

Alfred advances—Mrs. Selborne utters a loud scream

Alf. 'Tis just, that the breast, which causes such emotions, should in its turn be agitated

Mrs S. Oh! he's quite temperate, I'm glad I have such influence over him—I must practise the soothing system.

Alf. Your voice, fair creature, wrapt my soul in sweet oblivion—but your animated beauties wake me to admiration, to delight

Mrs S (*apart*) There's nothing flighty in that: on the contrary, I think he talks very sensibly Sir, if my humble powers of pleasing can contribute to your happiness—

Alf. Oh, lady, at first your eyes dazzled by their lustre; but the beams of kindness they now emit, kindle a flame, pure as the ray that vivified it

Mrs. S. How rationally he expresses himself! but, sir, were you not attached to Miss Darlington?

Alf Formerly, but she's now married, and, indeed, so happy, that I rejoice in their union—even now I saw the happy pair reclining on a mossy bank!

Mrs S (*alarmed*) On a mossy bank!

Alf. The grove echoed with their kisses.

Mrs S. Kisses! where are they? [*going out.*

Alf. (*restraining her*) 'Tis a retreat hallowed by wedded love—we must not profane it.

Enter Selborne and Maria, observed by Alfred.

Maria. There they are.

Sel. But what are they about?

Alf Instead of interrupting, let us emulate their happiness. May I not be allowed to approach the shrine of my adoration?

Mrs S. I must not irritate him. [*aside.*

Alf May I not be permitted to enfold the object of my idolatry; to offer an oblation of ten thousand kisses.

[*takes her round the waist, and kisses her hand rapturously.*

Selborne and Maria rush in between them Alfred throws himself into a garden chair, amuses himself in blowing the leaves of a flower, or some idiotic trifling.

Sel. Fanny! what are you about, Fanny?

Maria My dear friend, what are you about?

Mrs. S. Practising the soothing system.

Sel. The soothing system! zounds, ma'am, the irritating system.

Maria. Is this your friendship? this your return for my——

Mrs S Acting to perfection—the character of a loving wife

Sel To be found in a man's arms!

Mrs. S. To recline on a mossy bank—to make a grove echo with kisses!

Sel. Madam, the evidence of my eyes——

Mrs. S. Sir, the evidence of my ears——

Maria. Hush! hush! you forget the unhappy object who sits there, unconscious of the misery he oc

casions—Selborne, be composed—depend on't, he mistook your wife for me.

Sel Possibly; but I'll take care he don't make the same mistake again.

[*taking his wife under his arm, and wiping the hand Alfred has kissed.*

Maria. Mention my name to him—say I'm near, but with caution.

Sel (*to Alf.*) Sir, I believe you are acquainted with Miss Darlington?

Alf. Oh, yes, sir—I knew Miss Darlington.

Sel She is here.

Alf. Is she?—Ah! how do you do? Give you joy—nice weather, is not it?—Been at Brighton lately?

Maria. Oh! quite lost—quite irrational!

Mrs S. I own, I cannot perceive it

Alf Ladies, won't you walk, and enjoy this smiling landscape? How lovely nature has here distributed her charms (*between the ladies*) I've just come from Brighton—bow, wow, wow! (*barks like a dog*)—been bathing there—the doctor's call it being *dipt* Damn the fellows! they almost drowned me

Maria But—but—why—did—did they order you to be *dipt?*

Alf. Why? Ask me not the cause—it strikes upon my brain. 'Tis here! and here! and there! and every where! Ha, ha, ha, ha!—Oh! oh!

[*seems convulsed.*

Mar What's the matter?

Alf. Spasms! spasms!—Ha, ha, ha!

[*rises up, seems more convulsed, and falls into Maria's arms, exhausted.*

Maria. Oh! that he could know my feelings—that he could hear my vow, that I will never be another's.

Alf. (*starting up*) But will you be mine? Are you not married?

Maria Are you not out of your senses?

Alf. Yes, with joy! Oh! Maria, how we have trifled with our happiness. But explain.

Sel. Suffice it, my pretended marriage with this lady, was to prevent my uncle disinheriting me.

Alf. And your real wife——

Sel. Is here—let this embrace vouch for my veracity and my happiness. [*embraces Mrs. Sel.*

Alf. And this for mine. [*embracing Maria.*

Enter Sir Mark and domestics.

Sir Mark. There they are, all hugging again, madman and all. You audacious devils! what are you laughing at? But you shall be divorced—you shall be divorced, if it cost me ten thousand pounds.

Sel. Sir, it shan't cost you a penny.

Maria. Not a penny, sir.

Sir Mark. Why, ar'n't you married, George?

Sel. Yes, sir—to this lady.

Sir Mark. And you are—— [*to Maria.*

Maria. Going to be married to this gentleman. [*bowing.*

Sir Mark. But, George, to deceive your uncle.

Sel. Sir, that horrid new shilling you threatened me with.

Sir Mark. What, my favourite Maria to plot against me! Well, well, come here, you pretty rogue, and kiss your uncle. (*kisses Mrs Sel.*) Well, now, I have only to alter my will, and perhaps the day after to-morrow you may be in possession: at present, I'm as well as any man in England.

Maria. Then, dear Sir Mark, let well alone.

Sir Mark. And don't you want to dance over my grave?

Mrs. S. No, sir; we want you to dance at our wedding.

Sir Mark. Do you? Egod? here goes—let's have the fiddles. Maria, you shan't want a dower

FINALE.

Heart with heart uniting,
Village bells inviting,
Marriage vows delighting,
If you allów the bands

CHORUS.

Heart with heart, &c

SECOND SOLO.

I your presence courting,
Ask your kind resorting,
To protect your sporting,
O'er your fairy lands.

CHORUS.

Heart with heart, &c

RAISING THE WIND:

A Farce,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY JAMES KENNY

As performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.



NEW YORK:

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1825

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Plainway
Fanwou'd
Diddler
Sam
Richard
Waiter,
John, *Servant to Plainway*
Messenger

Peggy
Miss Lauretta Durable

SCENE—*A Country Town*

RAISING THE WIND.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

THE PUBLIC ROOM IN AN INN.—BELL RINGS

Sam Coming,—I'm a-coming.

Enter Waiter, and Sam meeting.

Wait Well, Sam, there's a little difference between this and hay-making, eh?

Sam. Yes, but I get on pretty decent, don't I? only, you see, when two or three people call at once, I'm apt to get flurried; and then I can't help listening to the droll things the young chaps say to one another at dinner; and then I don't exactly hear what they say to me, you see Sometimes too I fall a-laughing wi' 'em, and that they don't like, you understand.

Wait. Well, well, you'll soon get the better of all that [*A laugh, without.*

Sam. What's all that about?

Wait. [*looking out*] Oh, it's Mr. Diddler trying to joke himself into credit at the bar. But it won't do, they know him too well. By the bye, Sam, mind you never trust that fellow

Sam. What, him with the spy-glass?

Wait. Yes, that impudent short-sighted fellow.

Sam. Why, what for not?

Wait. Why, because he'll never pay you. The fellow lives by sponging—gets into people's houses by his songs and his bon mots. At some of the squires' tables he's as constant a guest as the parson, or the apothecary.

Sam. Come, that's an odd line to go into, however.

Wait. Then he borrows money of every body he meets

Sam. Nay, but will any body lend it him?

Wait. Why, he asks for such a trifle, to give it the appearance of immediate necessity, that people are ashamed to refuse him

Sam. Damma, he must be a droll chap, however.

Wait. Here he comes; mind you take care of him.

[*exit.*

Sam. Never you fear that, mun. I wasn't born two hundred miles north of Lunnun, to be done by Mr. Diddler, I know.

Enter Diddler.

Did. Tol lol de riddle lol —Eh! [*looking through a glass at Sam*] the new waiter—a very clod, by my hopes! an untutored clod. My clamorous bowels, be of good cheer.—Young man, how d'ye do? Step this way, will you?—A novice, I perceive.—And how d'ye like your new line of life?

Sam. Why very well, thank'ye How do you like your old one?

Did. [*aside*] Disastrous accents! a Yorkshire-man! [*to him*] What is your name, my fine fellow

Sam. Sam. You needn't tell me your's I know you, mun—fine fellow.

Did. [*aside*] Oh, Fame! Fame! you incorrigible gossip!—but *nil desperandum*—at him again. [*to him*] A prepossessing physiognomy—open and ruddy, importing health and liberality. Excuse my glass. I'm

short sighted. You have the advantage of me in that respect.

Sam. Yes; I can see as far as most folks.

Did. [*turning away*] Well, I'll thank ye to—O Sam, you haven't got such a thing as tenpence about you, have you?

Sam. Yes. [*they look at each other, Diddler expecting to receive it*] And I mean to keep it about me, you see

Did. Oh, aye, certainly. I only asked for information.

Sam Hark! there's the stage coach comed in. I must go and wait upon the passengers.—You'd better ax some of them, mayhap they mun gie you a little better information

Did Stop Hark ye, Sam, you can get me some breakfast first I'm devilish sharp set, Sam, you see I come from a long walk over the hills; and ——

Sam Aye, and you see I come fra—Yorkshire.

Did. You do, your unsophisticated tongue declares it. Superior to vulgar prejudices, I honour you for it, for I'm sure you'll bring me my breakfast as soon as any other countryman.

Sam. Aye, well what will you have?

Did Any thing, tea, coffee, an egg, and so forth

Sam Well now, one of us, you understand, in this transaction, mun have credit for a little while. That is, either I mun trust you for t'money, or you mun trust me for t'breakfast. Now, as you're above vulgar preju-prejudizes, and seem to be vastly taken wi' me, and as I'm not so conceited as to be above 'em, and a'n't at all taken wi' you, you'd better give me the money you see, and trust me for t'breakfast; he! he! he!

Did. What d'ye mean by that, Sam?

Sam. Or mayhap you'll say me a bon mot?

Did. Sir, you're getting impertinent.

Sam Oh, what, you don't like they terms? Well,

then, as you sometimes sing for your dinner, now you may whistle for your breakfast—you see; he! he! he!

Did. This it is to carry on trade without a capital. Once I paid my way, and in a pretty high road I travelled; but thou art now, Jerry Diddler, little better than a vagabond. Fie on thee! "Awake thee, rouse thy spirit!" honourably carry thy breakfasts and thy dinners too But how? My present trade is the only one that requires no apprenticeship. How unlucky, that the rich and pretty Miss Hanway, whose heart I won at Bath, should take so sudden a departure, that I should lose her address, and call myself a foolish romantic name, that will prevent her letters from reaching me. A rich wife would pay my debts, and heal my wounded pride. But the degenerate state of my wardrobe is confoundedly against me There's a warm old rogue, they say, with a pretty daughter, lately come to the house at the foot of the hill. I've a great mind—its d—d impudent; but if I hadn't surmounted my delicacy, I must have starved long ago [*Waiter crosses in haste.*] George, what's the name of the new family at the foot of the hill?

Wait. I don't know - I can't attend to you now.

[*exit.*

Did. There again. Oh! I mustn't bear this any longer. I must make a plunge – No matter for the name. Gad! perhaps it may be more imposing not to know it I'll go and scribble her a passionate billet immediately,—that is, if they'll trust me with pen and ink [*exit.*

Enter Fainwou'd and Richard—Sam shows them in.

Fain. Bring breakfast directly.

Sam. Yes, sir, yes.

Fain. Well, Richard, I think I shall awe them into a little respect *here*, though they're apt to grin at me in London.

Rich. That you will, I dare say, sir

Fain. Respect, Richard, is all I want. My father's money has made me a gentleman, and you never see any familiar jesting with your true gentlemen, I'm sure.

Rich. Very true, sir. And so, sir, you've come here to marry this Miss Plainway, without ever having seen her

Fain. Yes; but my father and her's are very old friends. They were school fellows.—They've lived at a distance from one another ever since, for Plainway always hated London. But my father has often visited him; and about a month ago, at Bristol, they made up this match. I didn't object to it, for my father says she's a very pretty girl, and besides, the girls in London don't treat me with proper respect, by any means.

Rich. At Bristol?—then they're new inhabitants here. Well, sir, you must muster all your gallantry.

Fain. I will, Dick, but I'm not successful that way, I always do some stupid thing or other, when I want to be attentive.—The other night, in a large assembly, I picked up the tail of a lady's gown, and gave it to her for her pocket handkerchief. Lord how the people did laugh!

Rich. It was an awkward mistake, to be sure, sir.

Fain. Well, now for a little refreshment, and then for Miss Plainway. Go, and look after the luggage, Richard. [*Sits down.* *Exit Richard.*

Enter Diddler, with a letter in his hand.

Did. Here it is.—brief but impressive. If she has but the romantic imagination of my Peggy, the direction alone must win her. [*reads*] "To the beautiful Maid at the foot of the hill." The words are so delicate, the arrangement so poetical, and the *tout-ensemble* reads with such a languishing cadence, that a blue-stocking garden-wench must feel it.—"To the beautiful Maid at the foot of the hill." She can't resist it!

Fain. I am very hungry. I wish they would bring me my breakfast.

Did. Breakfast! delightful sound!—Oh! bless your unsuspicious face; we'll breakfast together. [*advancing towards him.*] Sir your most obedient. From London, sir, I presume?

Fain. At your service, sir.

Did. Pleasant travelling, sir?

Fain. Middling, sir.

Did. Any news in town when you came away.

Fain. Not a word, sir.—[*aside*] Come, this is polite and respectful.

Did. Pray, sir, what's your opinion of affairs in general.

Fain. Sir?—why really, sir.—[*aside.*] Nobody would ask my opinion in town, now.

Did. No politician, perhaps. You talked of breakfast, sir; I was just thinking of the same thing—shall be proud of your company.

Fain. You're very obliging, sir; but really I'm in such haste—

Did. Don't mention it. Company is every thing to me. I'm that sort of man, that I really couldn't dispense with you.

Fain. Sir, since you insist upon it. Waiter.

Sam. [*without*] Coming, sir.

Fain. Bless me, they're very inattentive here; they never bring you what you call for.

Did. No; they very often serve *me* so.

Enter Sam.

Fain. Let that breakfast be for two.

Did. Yes, this gentleman and I are going to breakfast together.

Sam. [*to Fainwou'd.*] You order it, do you, sir?

Fain. Yes, to be sure; didn't you hear me?

Sam. [*chuckling.*] Yes, I heard you.

Fain. Then bring it immediately.

Sam. Yes. [*still chuckling.*]

Fain What d'ye mean by laughing, you scoundrel?

Did. Aye, what d'ye mean by laughing, you scoundrel! [*drives Sam out, and follows.*

Fain. Now, that's disrespectful, especially to that gentleman, who seems to be so well known here; but these country waiters are always impertinent.

Enter Diddler, his letter in his hand.

Did. A letter for me?—Desire the man to wait. That bumpkin is the most impertinent—I declare it's enough to—You haven't got such a thing as half-a-crown about you, have you, sir? there's a messenger waiting, and I haven't got any change about me

Fain Certainly—at your service

[*takes out his purse, and gives him money.*

Did I'll return it to you, sir, as soon as possible. Allo! here! [*waiter enters*] here's the man's money, [*putting it into his own pocket*] and bring the breakfast immediately

Wait Here it is, sir. [*exit.*

Enter Sam, with breakfast.

Did There we are, sir. Now, no ceremony, I beg, for I'm rather in a hurry myself [*exit Sam, chuckling Diddler pours out coffee for himself*] Help yourself, and then you'll have it to your liking. When you've done with that loaf, sir, I'll thank you for it [*takes it out of his hands*] Thank'ye, sir. Breakfast, sir, is a very wholesome meal. [*eats fast.*

Fain It is, sir; I always eat a good one

Did So do I, sir, (*aside*) when I can.

Fain. I'm an early riser too, and in town the servants are so lazy, that I'm often obliged to wait a long while before I can get any.

Did That's exactly my case in the country

Fain And it's very tantalizing, when one's hungry, to be served so.

Did. Very, sir;—I'll trouble you once more.

[*snatches the bread out of his hand again*

Fain. This can't be meant for disrespect, but it's very like it. [*aside.*

Did. Are you looking for this, sir? you can call for more if you want it [*returns a very small bit.*] Here, waiter!

Wait. Sir?

Did. Some more bread for thi gentleman.—Why, bless my soul, you eat nothing at all, sir!

Fain. Why, bless my soul, I can get at nothing.

Sam, enters with rolls.

Did. Very well, Sam; thank ye, Sam; but don't giggle, Sam; curse you, don't laugh [*following him out.*

Sam. Ecod! you're in luck, Mr. Diddler. [*exit.*

Did. (*again taking his letter out of his pocket.*)—What, another letter by the coach! Might I trouble you again? you haven't got such a thing as tenpence about you, have you? I live close by, sir. I'll send it to you all the moment I go home—be glad to see you any time you'll look in, sir.

Fain. You do me honour, sir. I haven't any halfpence; but there's my servant, you can desire him to give it you.

Did. You're very obliging. (*puts the rolls Sam brought, unobserved, into his hat*) I'm extremely sorry to give you so much trouble I will take that liberty. [*aside*] Come, I've raised the wind for today, however

Fain. That must be a man of some breeding, by his ease and his impudence

Sam is crossing.

Who is that gentleman, waiter?

Sam. Gentleman!

Fain. Yes; by his using an inn, I suppose he lives upon his means—don't he?

Sam. Yes; but they're the oddest sort of means you ever heard of in your life. What, don't you know him?

Fain. No.

Sam. Well, I thought so.

Fain. He invited me to breakfast with him.

Sam. Aye; well, that was handsome enough.

Fain. I thought so myself.

Sam. But it isn't quite so handsome to leave you to pay for it.

Fain. Leave me to pay for it!

Sam. (*looking out*) Yes, I see he's off there.

Fain. Oh! he's only gone to pay for a letter.

Sam. A letter! bless you, there's no letter comes here for him.

Fain Why, he's had two this morning; I lent him the money to pay for 'em.

Sam. No! did you though?

Fain Yes, he had'nt any change about him.

Sam (*laughing*) Dam' if that an't the softest trick I ever know'd—You come fra Lunnun, don't you, sir?

Fain. Why, you giggling blockhead, what d'ye mean?

Sam Why, he's had no letters, I tell you, but one he has just been writing here himself.

Fain An impudent rascal!

Sam. Well, sir, we'll put t' breakfast all to your bill, you understand, as you ordered it.

Fain Psha. don't tease me about the breakfast.

Sam Upon my soul, the flattest trick I ever heard of [*exit laughing.*

Fain. Well, this is the most disrespectful treatment—

Richard enters, meeting him.

Rich I lent that gentleman the tenpence, sir.

Fain. Confound that gentleman, and you too!

Exit, driving off Richard

SCENE II.—THE OUTSIDE OF PLAINWAY'S HOUSE.

Enter Plainway, Peggy, and Miss Durable.

Miss L. Dur Dear cousin, how soon you hurry us home.

Plain. Cousin, you grow worse and worse. You'd be gaping after the men from morning till night.

Miss L. Dur. Mr Plainway, I tell you again, I'll not bear your sneers; though I won't blush to own, as I've often told you, that I think the society of accomplished men as innocent as it is pleasing

Plain. Innocent enough with you it must be. But there's no occasion to stare accomplished men full in the face as they pass you, or to sit whole hours at a window to gape at them, unless it is to talk to them in your famous language of the eyes, and that I'm afraid few of 'em understand, or else you speak it very badly; for, whenever you ask 'em a question in it, they never seem to make you any answer

Miss L. Dur Cousin Plainway, you're a sad brute, and I'll never pay you another visit while I live.

Plain I'm afraid, cousin, you have helped my daughter to some of her wild notions Come, knock at the door. [*Miss D. knocks*] Well, Peg, are you any better prepared to meet your lover?

Peg. [*In a pensive tone and attitude*] Alas! cruel fate ordains I shall never see him more.

[*The door opens—Miss D. goes into the house.*

Plain. There—she's at her romance again—Never meet him more! why, you're going to meet him to-day for the first time.

Peg. You speak of the vulgar, the sordid Fainwou'd; I, of the all-accomplished Mortimer.

Plain. There! that Mortimer again.—Let me hear that name no more, hussy; I am your father, and will be obeyed.

Peg. No, sir; as Miss Somerville says, fathers, of ignorant and grovelling minds, have no right to our obedience!

Plain. Miss Somerville! and who the devil is Miss Somerville?

Peg. What, sir! have you never read the Victim of Sentiment?

Plain. D—n the victim of sentiment! Get in, you baggage.—Victim of Sentiment, indeed!

[*they go into the house.*

Enter Diddler.

Did. There she dwells. Grant, my kind stars! that she may have no lover, that she may be dying for want of one; that she may tumble about in her rosy slumbers with dreaming of some unknown swain, lovely and insinuating as Jeremy Diddler. Now, how shall I get my letter delivered?

Miss L. Dur. [*appearing at the window*] Well, I declare the balmy zephyr breathes such delightful and refreshing breezes, that, in spite of my cousin's sneers, I can't help indulging in them.

Did. [*looking up*] There she is, by my hopes! Ye sylphs and cupids! strengthen my sight, that I may luxuriate on her beauties. No—not a feature can I distinguish—but she's gazing on mine, and that's enough.

Miss L. Dur. What a sweet-looking young gentleman—and his eyes are directed towards me.—Oh! my palpitating heart! what can he mean?

Did. You're a made man, Jerry. I'll pay off my old scores, and never borrow another sixpence while I live.

Miss L. Dur. [*sings*] "Oh! listen, listen, to the voice of love."—

Did. Voice indifferent.—but d—n music when I'm done singing for my dinners.

Enter Sam.

Eh! Sam here—he shall deliver my letter.—My dear Sam, I'm so glad to see you! I forgive your laughing at me. Will you do me a favour!

Sam. If it won't take me long, for you see I've gotten a parcel to deliver in a great hurry. By the bye, how nicely you did that chap—

Did Hush, you rogue. Look up there—do you see that lady?

Sam. Yes, I see her.

Did Isn't she an angel?

Sam Why, if she be, she's been a good while dead, I reckon; long enough to appearance to be t'mother of angels.

Did Sam, you're a wag, but I don't understand your jokes. Now, if you can contrive to deliver this letter into her own hands, you shall be handsomely rewarded

Sam. Handsomely rewarded!—Aye, well, let's see; [*takes the letter*] "To the beauti—"

Sam. "Beautiful maid at the foot of the hill."—[*looks up at the window*] Damma, now you're at some of your tricks. [*aside*] The old toad's got some money I reckon—Well, I can but try, you know—And as to the reward, why it's neither here nor there.

[*knocks at the door.*

Did. Thank ye, my dear fellow. Get an answer if you can, and I'll wait here for you.

[*the door opens—Sam nods, and enters.*

Miss L Dur A letter to deliver?—Oh, dear, I'm all of a flutter! I must learn what it means

[*retires from the window.*

Did. Transport! she has disappeared to receive it. She's mine.—Now I shall visit the country squires upon other terms. I'll only sing when it comes to my turn, and never tell a story or cut a joke but at my own table. Yet I'm sorry for my pretty Peggy I did love that little rogue, and I'm sure she never thinks of her

Mortimer without sighing—[*Sam opens the door, holds it open, and beckons*] Eh, Sam! well, what answer?

Sam. Why, first of all, she fell into a vast trepidation.—

Did Then you saw herself?—

Sam Yes, I axed to see she that were sitting at the window over the door.

Did. Well?

Sam. Well you see, as I tell you, when she opened the letter, she fell into a vast trepidation, and flutter'd and blush'd, and blush'd and flutter'd—in short—I never see'd any person play such comical games i' my days

Did. It was emotion, Sam.

Sam Yes, I know it was a motion, but it was a devilish queer one Then at last, says she, stuttering, as might be our pot-boy of a frosty morning, says she, tell your master,—she thought you was my master, he! he! he!

Did. My dear Sam, go on.

Sam Well —tell your master, says she, that his request is rather bold, but I've too much—too much confidence in my own dis—dissension—

Did Discretion—

Sam Aye, I fancy you're right—in my own discretion, to be afraid of granting it. Then she turned away, blushing again—

Did Like the rose—

Sam. Like the rose, he! he! he!—like a red cabbage.

Did. I'm a happy fellow.

Sam. [*smiling*] Why, how much did you ax her for?

Did. Only for an interview, Sam

Sam. Oh! then you'd better go in. I ha'n't shut the door.

Did I fixed it for to-morrow morning, but there'

nothing like striking while the iron's hot. I will go in, find her out, and lay myself at her feet immediately. I'll reward you, Sam, depend upon it I shall be a monied man soon, and then I'll reward you —[*Sam sneers*]—I will, Sam, I give you my word

[*goes into the house.*

Sam. Come, that's kind too, to give me what nobody else will take. [*exit.*

SCENE III —A ROOM IN PLAINWAY'S HOUSE.

Enter Diddler cautiously.

Not here.—If I could but find a closet now, I'd hide myself till she came nigh. Luckily, here is one Who have we here?

[*Retires into a closet, and listens from the door.*

Enter Fainwou'd and Servant.

Ser. Walk in, sir, I'll send my master to you directly [*exit.*

Fain. Now let me see if I can't meet with a little more respect here.

Did. [*approaching and examining him*] My cockney, friend, by the Lord! Come in pursuit of me, perhaps!

Fain. Old Plainway will treat me becomingly, no doubt, and as he positively determined with my father that I should have his daughter, I presume she's prepared to treat me with proper respect too

Did. What! Plainway and his daughter! Here's a discovery. Then my Peggy, after all, is the beautiful maid at the foot of the hill, and the sly rogue wouldn't discover herself at the window, on purpose to convict me of infidelity. How unlucky! and a rival arrived too, just at the unfortunate crisis

Servant returns.

Ser. He'll be with you immediately, Mr. Fainwou'd. [*exit.*

Did. Mr. Fainwou'd, eh!—Now, what's to be done? If I could but get rid of him, I wouldn't despair of excusing myself to Peggy.

Fain. I wonder what my father says in his letter of introduction. [*takes a letter out of his pocket.*

Did. A letter of introduction!—Oh! oh! the first visit then. Gad, I have it,—it's the only way; so impudence befriend me! But, first, I'll lock the old gentleman out (*goes cautiously, and locks the door whence the Servant came out,—then advances briskly to Fainwou'd*) Sir, your most obedient.

Fain. He here!

Did. So you've found me out, sir! But I've sent you the money,—three and fourpence wasn't it?—two-and-six and ten—

Fain. Sir, I didn't mean—

Did. No, sir, I dare say not; merely for a visit. Well, I am very glad to see you. Won't you take a seat?

Fain. And you live here, do you, sir?

Did. At present, sir, I do.

Fain. And is your name Plainway?

Did. No, sir, I'm Mr Plainway's nephew. I'd introduce you to my uncle, but he's very busy at present with Sir Robert Rental settling preliminaries for his marriage with my cousin.

Fain. Sir Robert Rental's marriage with Miss Plainway?

Did. Oh! you've heard a different report on that subject, perhaps. Now, thereby hangs a very diverting tale. If you're not in a hurry, sit down, and I'll make you laugh about it.

Fain. (*aside*) This is all very odd, upon my soul.

(*they sit down.*

Did You see, my uncle did agree with an old fellow of the name of Fainwou'd, a Londoner, to marry my cousin to his son, and expects him down every day for the purpose, but, a little while ago, Sir Robert Rental, a baronet, with a thumping estate, fell in love with her, and she fell in love with him So my uncle altered his mind, as it was very natural he should you know, and agreed to this new match —And as he never saw the young cockney, and has since heard that he's quite a vulgar, conceited, foolish fellow, he hasn't thought it worth his while to send him any notice of the affair So, if he should come down, you know, we shall have a d—d good laugh at his disappointment. [*Fainwou'd drops his letter, which Diddler picks up unseen*) Ha! ha! ha! Capital go! isn't it?

Fain Ha! ha! ha! a very capital go, indeed (*aside*) Here's disrespect! (*to him*) But if the cockney shouldn't be disposed to think of the affair quite so merrily as you?

Did O the puppy! if he's refractory, I'll pull his nose.

Fain. (*aside*) Here's an impudent scoundrel! (*rises*) Well, I shall cheat 'em of their laugh by this meeting, however.

Did. (*aside*) A shy cock, I see.

Fain. O, you'll pull his nose, will you?

Did. If he's troublesome, I shall certainly have that pleasure. Nothing I enjoy more than pulling noses.

Fain. Sir, I wish you a good morning Perhaps, sir, you may—*a knocking at the door Diddler locked.*

Did (*aside*) Just in time, by Jupiter! (*aloud*) Be quiet there! Damn that mastiff!—Sir, I'm sorry you're going so soon, (*knocking again*) Be quiet, I say — Well, I wish you a good morning, sir. Then, you won't stay, and take a bit of dinner?

Fain. Perhaps, sir, I say, you may hear from me again.

Did. Sir, I shall be extremely happy, I'm sure. (*exit Fainwou'd*) Bravo, Jeremy! admirably hit off. (*knocking repeated*) Now for the old gentleman.

[*opens the door.*

Enter Plainway.

Plain My dear Mr Fainwou'd, I'm extremely happy to see you. I beg pardon for keeping you so long. Why, who the deuce could lock that door?

Did. He! he! he! It was I, sir

Plain. You, why what—

Did. A bit of humour, sir, to show you I determined to make free, and consider myself at home

Plain (*aside*) A bit of humour! why, you must be an inveterate humourist, indeed, to begin so soon. (*to him*) Well, come, that's merry and hearty

Did. Yes, you'll find I've all that about me.

Plain Well, and how is my old friend, and all the rest of the family?

Did. Wonderfully well, my old buck But here, here you have it all in black and white.

[*gives the letter.*

Plain So, an introduction

Did (*aside*) It's rather unlucky, I don't know a little more of my family.

[*struts familiarly about.*

Plain (*reads*) "This will at length introduce to you your son-in law I hope he will prove agreeable both to you and your daughter His late military habits, I think, have much improved his appearance; and perhaps you will already discern something of the officer about him" Something of the officer—(*looking at him*) Damn me, it must be a sheriff's officer then. "Treat him delicately, and, above all, avoid raillery with him."—So then I suppose, though he can give a joke, he can't take one.—"It is apt to make him unhappy, as he always thinks it levelled at that stiffness in his manners, arising from his extreme timidity and bashfulness."—"Assure Peggy of the

cordial affection of her intended father, and your faithful friend, FRAS. FAINWOU'D." A very pretty introduction, truly.

Did. But where is my charming Peggy? I say—could not I have a little private conversation to begin with?

Plain. Why I must introduce you, you know—I desired her to follow me——Oh! here she comes.

Did (*aside*) Now if she should fall in a passion and discover me!

Enter Peggy.

Plain My dear, this is Mr Fainwou'd.

Did. Madam, your most devoted.

[*she screams—he supports her.*

Peg (*in a low tone*) Mortimer!

Did (*aside to her*) Hush! Don't be astonished—you see what I'm at—keep it up

Plain What ails the girl? Oh, I see she's at her romance again—Mr. Fainwou'd, try if you can't bring her about, while I go and fetch my cousin Laury to you. [*exit.*

Did. No fear, sir, she is coming about.—My dear Peggy! after an age of fruitless search, do I again behold you in these arms?

Peg Cruel man! how could you torment me with so long an absence, and so long a silence?—I've written to you a thousand times

Did. A thousand unlucky accidents have prevented my receiving your letters; and your address I most fatally lost not an hour after you gave it to me.

Peg. And how did you find it out at last?

Did. By an accidental rencontre with my rival.—I've hummed him famously, frightened him away from the house, contrived to get his letter of recommendation, and presented myself in his stead.

Peg. It is enough to know that you are again mine; and now we'll never part.

Did. Never, If I can help it, I assure you.

Peg. Lord, Mortimer, what a change there is in your dress!

Did. Eh? Yes, I've dressed so on purpose—rather in the extreme, perhaps—but I thought it would look my vulgar rival better

Peg. Well thought of; so it will.

Did. (*aside*) Very odd—nothing about the letter—I won't start it, however.

Peg Here's my father coming back. I'd better seem a little distant, you know.

Did You're right.

Enter Plainway, Didler not seeming to notice him.

Do, my dear lady be merciful But perhaps it is in mercy that you thus avert from me the killing lustre of those piercing eyes.

Plain. (*aside*) Well done, timidity. (*to him*) Bravo! Mr. Fainwou'd, you'll not be long an unsuccessful wooer, I see Well, my cousin's coming to see you, the moment she's a little composed —Why, Peg, I fancy the old fool has been gaping out at the window to some purpose at last I verily believe somebody, either in jest, or in earnest, has really been writing her a billet-doux, for I caught her quite in a fluster reading a letter, and the moment she saw me, she grappled it up, and her cheeks turned as red as her nose.

Did (*much disconcerted, aside*) O Lord! here's the riddle unfolded. Curse my blind eyes! what a scrape they've brought me into! A fustry old maid, I suppose. What the devil shall I do? I must humour the blunder, or she'll discover me.

Plain. Here she comes.

Did. (*aside*) O Lord! O Lord!

Enter Miss Durable.

Plain. Mr. Fainwou'd, Miss Durable ——Miss Durable, Mr. Fainwou'd. [*Miss L. Durable screams, and seems much agitated.*

Did (*advancing to her*) My dear lady, what's the matter? (*aside to her*) Don't be astonished—You see

what I am at Keep it up. [*continues whispering to her.*

Plain. Why, what the devil! this fellow frightens my whole family. It must be his officer-like appearance, I suppose.

Peg (*aside*) Well, I declare Laurella means to fall in love with him, and supplant me

Miss L. Dur (*aside to Diddler*) Oh! you're a bold adventurous man.

Did. (*to her*) Yes, I am a very bold adventurous man; but love, madam——

Miss L. Dur. Hush!

Plain Why, Famwou'd, you seem to make some impression upon the ladies

Did. Not a very favourable one, it would seem, sir

Miss L. Dur I beg Mr. Famwou'd's pardon, I'm sure it was merely a slight indisposition that seized me

Plain Oh! a slight indisposition, was it?

Peg (*aside*) Yes, I see she's throwing out her lines.

Did Will you allow me, madam, to lead you to the air?

Plain. Aye, suppose we show Mr Famwou'd our garden. A walk will do none of us any harm.

Miss L. Dur. With all my heart, cousin

Plain Unless Mr. Famwou'd is fatigued with his journey

Did. Not in the least, I assure you Miss Plainway, give me leave. (*aside, in taking her hand*) Did you observe that old fool? I believe she has a design upon me

Peg (*aside*) That she has, I'll be sworn.

Did (*aside*) I'll sum her—Miss Durable, here's the other arm at your service

Miss L. Dur. (*taking it*) Dear sir, you're extremely obliging.

Did. Don't say so, madam, the obligation is mine. (*nodding*) Plainway, you see what a way I'm in.

[*exeunt Diddler, Peggy, and Miss Durable*

Plain. Bashfulness!—Damme, if ever I saw such an impudent dog! *Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I

THE INN

Enter Fainwou'd and Richard.

Fain. In short, I never met with such disrespectful treatment since I was born —and so the rascal's name is Diddler, is it?

Rich. So I have heard the waiters call him.

Fain. As to the disappointment, Richard, it's a very fortunate one for me, for it must be a scrubby family indeed, when one of its branches is forced to have recourse to such low practices But to be treated with such contempt! why, am I to be laughed at every where?

Rich. If I was you, sir, I'd put that question where it's fit it should be answered

Fain. And so I will, Richard —If I don't go back, and kick up such a bobbery—I warrant I'll—Why, he called me a vulgar, conceited, foolish cockney.

Rich. No, sure?

Fain. Yes, but he did. and what a fool my father must have been not to see through such a set—a low-bred rascal, with his three-and-fourpence! But if I don't—I'll take your advice, Richard—I'll hire a post-chaise directly, drive to the house, expose that

Mr. Diddler, blow up all the rest of the family, Sir Robert Rental included, and then set off for London, and turn my back upon them for ever [*exeunt.*

Enter Sam with a letter, followed by a Messenger.

Sam Why, but what for do you bring it here?

Mess. Why, because it says, to be delivered with all possible speed. I know he comes here sometimes, and most likely won't be at home till night.

Sam Well, if I see him, I'll gi't to him. Most likely he'll be here by and by

Mess Then I'll leave it [*exit.*

Sam Mr Jeremiah Diddler—Dang it, what a fine seal! and I'll be shot if it don't feel like a bank-note. To be delivered wi' all possible speed too. I shouldn't wonder now if it brought him some good luck Ha! ha! ha! with all my heart. He's a d—d droll dog, and I like him vastly. [*exit.*

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN PLAINWAY'S HOUSE.

Plainway, Diddler, Peggy, and Miss Durable at Table.

Plain. Bravo! Ha! ha! ha! [*they all laugh.*

Miss L. Dur. Upon my word, Mr. Fainwou'd, you sing delightfully; you surely have had some practice?

Did A little madam.

Miss L. Dur Well, I think it must be a very desirable accomplishment, if it were only for your own entertainment

Did. It is in that respect, madam, that I have hitherto found it most particularly desirable

Miss L. Dur. But surely the pleasure of pleasing your hearers——

Did. I *now* find to be the highest gratification it can bestow, except that of giving me claim to a return

in kind from you. (*aside to Peggy*) I lay it on thick, don't I?

Miss L. Dur. You really must excuse me; I can't perform to my satisfaction without the assistance of an instrument.

Plain. Well, well, cousin, then we'll hear you by and bye; there's no hurry, I'm sure.—Come, Mr. Fainwou'd, your glass is empty.

Miss L. Dur. Peggy, my love.

[*they rise to retire, exit Miss L. Dur.*

Plain. Peg, here! Come back, I want to speak with you

Peg. (*returns*) Well, papa?

Plain. Mr. Fainwou'd. (*they rise*)—You know I told you of a billet-doux that old Laury had received.

Peg. Yes, sir.

Plain. Coming through the passage to dinner, I picked it up.

Peg. & Did. No!

Plain. Yes; I have it in my pocket,—one of the richest compositions you ever beheld. I'll read it to you.

Did. (*aside*) How unlucky! Now, if she sees it, she'll know the hand.

Plain. (*reads*) "To the beautiful Maid at the foot of the hill."—Ha, ha, ha!

Did. & Peg Ha, ha, ha!

[*Diddler endeavours to keep Peggy from overlooking him.*

Plain. "Most celestial of terrestrial beings! I have received a wound from your eyes, which baffles all surgical skill. The smile of her who gave it, is the only balsam that can save it. "Let me, therefore supplicate admittance to your presence to-morrow, to know at once if I may live or die.

That if I'm to live, I may live your fond lover,
And if I'm to die, I may get it soon over.

ADONIS."

[they all laugh, Didd.er appears much disconcerted.

Plain. Why, this Adonis must be about as great a fool as his mistress; eh, sir? Ha, ha, ha!

Did. Yes, sir; he, he, he!—(*aside*) They've found me out, and this is a quiz.

Peg. Or more likely some poor knave, papa, that wants her money; ha, ha, ha!

Plain. Ha, ha!—Or perhaps a compound of both; eh, sir?

Did. Very likely, sir; he, he, he! [*aside.* They're at me.

Plain. But we must laugh her out of the connection, and disappoint the rogue, however; though I dare say he little thought to create so much merriment. So short sighted is roguery.

Did. (*aside*) Short-sighted!—It's all up, to a certainty.

Plain. So she's returning; impatient of being left alone, I suppose.—Now, we'll smoke her.

Enter Miss L. Durable.

Miss L. Dur. Bless me! why, I'm quite forsaken among you all.

Plain. Forsaken, my dear cousin! It's only for age and ugliness to talk of being forsaken, not for a beautiful maid like you,—the most celestial of terrestrial beings! [*all laugh.*

Miss L. Dur. (*aside*) I'm astonished,—*he* laughing too!

Did. (*aside to her*) Excuse my laughing, it's only in jest.

Miss L. Dur. In jest, sir!

Did. Yes. [*whispers and winks*

Plain. Well, but, my dear cousin, I hope you'll be merciful to the tender youth. Such a frown as that, now, would kill him at once.

Miss L. Dur Cousin Plainway, this insult is intolerable. I'll not stay in your house another hour.

Plain. Nay, but my dear Laury, I didn't expect that truth would give offence.—We'll leave Mr. Fainwou'd to make our peace with you.

Did. (*aside*) Leave me alone with her? Oh, the devil!

Peg. Ay, do, Mr. Fainwou'd, endeavour to pacify her;—pray induce her to continue a little longer "the beautiful maid at the foot of the hill."

[*exeunt Plainway and Peggy.*

[*Miss L. Durable and Diddler look sheepishly at each other.*

Did. (*aside*) I'm included in the quiz, as I'm a gentleman.—(*to her*) My dear madam, how could you—

Miss L. Dur. How could I what, sir?

Did. Wear a pocket with a hole in't!

Miss L. Dur. I wear no pockets which caused the fatal accident But, sir, I trust it is an accident that will cause no change in your affection.

Did. (*aside*) Damn it! now she's going to be amorous—(*to her*) None in the world, madam. I assure you, I love you as much as ever I did.

Miss L. Dur. I fear my conduct is very imprudent.—If you should be discovered———

Did. It's not at all unlikely, madam, that I am already.—(*aside*) Now she'll be boring me for explanations. I must get her among them again.—(*to her*) Or if I am not, if we don't take great care, I soon shall be; therefore I think we'd better immediately join—

Miss L. Dur. Oh, dear sir! so soon?—I declare you quite agitate me with the idea.

Did. Ma'am!

Miss L. Dur It is so awful a ceremony, that really a little time—

Did. My dear ma'am, I didn't mean any thing about a ceremony

Miss L. Dur. Sir!

Did. You misunderstand me; I—

Miss L. Dur. You astonish me, sir! no ceremony, indeed!—and would you then take advantage of my too susceptible heart, to ruin me? would you rob me of my innocence?—would you despoil me of my honour?—cruel, barbarous, inhuman man!

[*affects to faint.*

Did (*supporting her*) Upon my soul, madam, I would not interfere with your honour on any account. —(*aside*) I must make an outrageous speech; there's nothing else will make her easy. (*Falls on his knees; Peggy enters listening*) Paragon of premature divinity, what instrument of death, or torture, can equal the dreadful power of your frowns? Poison, pistols, pikes, steel traps, and spring guns, the thum screw, or lead kettle, the knout, or cat o'-nine-tails, are impotent, compared with the word of your indignation! Cease then to wound a heart, whose affection for you nothing can abate whose—

Peg. (*interrupting him, and showing his letter*) So, sir, this is your fine effusion, and this is the fruit of it. False, infamous man!

Did. (*aside to Miss L Dur.*) I told you so. You'd better retire, and I'll contrive to get off. My dear Miss Plainway—

Peg Don't dear me, sir, I've done with you.

Did. If you would but hear—

Peg. I'll hear nothing, sir. You can't clear yourself;—this duplicity can only arise from the meanest of motives, Mr. Mortimer.

Miss L. Dur. Mr. Mortimer!—Then I am the dupe, after all!

Peg. You're a mean—

Miss L. Dur. Base—

Peg. Deceitful—

Miss L. Dur. Abominable—

Did. (*aside*) Here's a breeze! This is raising the wind, with a vengeance?—My dear Miss Flamway, I —a—— My dear Miss Durable's (*aside*) pray retire; in five minutes I'll come to you in the garden, and explain all to your satisfaction

Miss L. Dur. And if you don't—

Did. Oh, I will.—now, do go.

Peg. And you too, madam, aren't you ashamed—

Miss L. Dur. Don't talk to me in that style, Miss; it ill becomes me to account for my conduct to you; and I shall therefore leave you, with perfect indifference, to make your own construction.—(*to him*)—You'll find me in the garden, sir [*exit.*

Did. (*aside*) Floating in the fish-pond, I hope.—(*to Peggy*) My dear Peggy, how could you for a moment believe—

Peg. I'll not listen to you; I'll go and expose you to my father immediately. He'll order the servants to toss you in a blanket, and then to kick you out of doors.

Did. (*holding her*) So, between two stools, poor Jeremy comes to the ground at last. Now, Peggy, my dear Peggy, I know I shall appease you.

[*he takes her hand.*

Peg. If you detain me by force, I must stay, and if you will talk, I must hear you, but you can't force me to attend to you

Did. That's as you please, only hear me. That letter—I did write that letter. But, as a proof that I love you, and only you, and that I will love you as long as I live, I'll run away with you directly.

Peg. Will you, this instant?

Did. I'll hire a post chaise immediately:—(*aside*) that is, if I can get credit for one

Peg. Go and order it

Did. I'm off. (*going*) Nothing but disasters! here's the cockney coming back in a terrible rage, and I shall be discovered

Peg How unlucky! Couldn't you get rid of him again?

Did. Keep out of the way, and I'll try.

[*she retires.*

Enter Fainwou'd.

Fain. So, sir—

Did. How do you do, again, sir? Hasn't my servant left you three-and-four-pence yet?—Bless my soul, how stupid!

Fain. Sir, I want to see Mr Plainway.

Did. Do you, sir? that's unlucky: He's just gone out—to take a walk in the fields.

Fain. I don't believe a word you say.

Did. (*with affected dignity*) Don't believe a word I say, sir!

Fain No, sir.

Did Sir, I desire you'll quit this house.

Fain. I sha'n't, sir.

Did. You sha'n't, sir?

Fain No, sir; my business is with Mr Plainway. I've a post-chaise waiting for me at the door, and, therefore, have no time to lose.

Did. A post-chaise waiting at the door, sir?

Fain Yes, sir—the servant told me Mr. Plainway *was* within, and I'll find him too, or I'm very much mistaken.

[*exit.*

Did A post-chaise waiting at the door!—we'll bribe the post-boy, and jump into it. Now, who shall I borrow a guinea of to bribe the post-boy?

Enter John.

John Has that gentleman found my master, sir?

Did Oh yes, John, I showed him into the drawing-room. (*John is going*) Stop, John; step this way.—Your name is John, isn't it?

John. Yes, sir

Did. Well, how d'ye do, John?—Got a snug place here, John?

John. Yes, sir, very snug.

Did. Aye, good wages, good vails, eh?

John. Yes, sir, very fair.

Did. Um.—You haven't got such a thing as a guinea about you, have you?

John. No, sir

Did. Aye—that's all, John; I only asked for information. [*exit John*]—Gad! I said a civil thing or two to the gardner just now, I'll go and try him; and, to prevent all farther rencontres, make my escape through the garden-gate. [*going.*

Enter Miss L. Durable.

Oh, Lord, here is old innocence again. [*aside*] I was just coming to you.

Miss L. Dur. Well, sir, I'm all impatience for this explanation.—So, you've got rid of Miss Peggy?

Did. Yes, I have pacified her, and she's retired to the—— drawing room.—You haven't got such a thing as a guinea about you, madam, have you? A troublesome post-boy, that drove me this morning, is teazing me for his money. You see I happened unfortunately to change my small——

Miss L. Dur Oh, these things will happen, sir.—[*gives a purse*]—There's my purse, sir; take whatever you require.

Did. I'm robbing you, ma'am.

Miss L. Dur. Not at all; you know you'll soon return it.

Did. [*aside*] That's rather doubtful.—[*to her*]—I'll be with you again, madam, in a moment. [*going.*

Miss L. Dur. What, sir! So even your post-boys are to be attended to before me!

Did. Ma'am!

Miss L. Dur. But I see through your conduct, sir. This is a mere expedient to avoid me again.—This is too much.

Did. [*aside*] What the devil shall I do now? Oh!—oh dear!—oh Lord!

Miss L. Dur. What's the matter?

Did. Your cruelty has so agitated me—I faint,—a little water,—a little water will recover me! [*falls into a chair*]—Pray, get me a little water!

Miss L. Dur. Bless me, he's a going into hysterics! Here!—help, John!—Betty, a little water immediately! [*exit,—Diddler runs off.*

Enter Fainwou'd.

Fain. No where to be found.—So, Mr. Diddler is gone now. They've found me out by my letter, and avoid me on purpose. But I'll not stir out of the house till I see Mr. Plainway, I'm determined; so I'll sit myself quietly down. [*sits down in the chair Diddler has left*]—I'll make the whole family treat me with a little more respect, I warrant.

Enter Miss L. Durable, hastily, with a glass of water, which she throws in his face.—She screams,—he rises in a fury.

Miss L. Dur. Here, my love.—Ah!

Fain. Damnation, madam! what d'ye mean?

Miss L. Dur. Oh dear, sir! I took you for another gentleman.

Fain. Nonsense, madam! you couldn't mean to serve any gentleman in that way. Where is Mr. Plainway? I'll have satisfaction for this treatment.

Enter Plainway.

Plain. Hey-day! hey-day, cousin! Why, who is this gentleman; and what is all this noise about?

Miss L. Dur. I'm sure, cousin, I don't know who the gentleman is. All that I can explain is, that Mr. Fainwou'd was taken ill in that chair; that I went to get some water to recover him; and the moment after, when I came back, I found his place occupied by that gentleman.

Fain. Madam, this is no longer a time for dallering. You found Mr. Fainwou'd's place occupied by me.

who am Mr. Fainwou'd; and you found him suffering no illness at all, though you wanted to give him one.

Plain. and Miss L. Dur You Mr. Fainwou'd!

Fain. Yes, sir; and you've found out by this time, I suppose, that I'm perfectly acquainted with all your kind intentions towards me; that I know of your new son-in-law, Sir Robert Rental; that I am informed I am to make merriment for you, and that, if I am refractory, your nephew, Mr. Diddler, is to pull my nose.

Plain. My dear sir, I haven't a nephew in the world, and never heard of such people as Sir Robert Rental, or Mr. Diddler, in the whole course of my life.

Fain. This is amazing!

Plain. It is, upon my soul!—You say your name is Fainwou'd?

Fain. Certainly.

Plain. Then nothing but the appearance of the other Mr. Fainwou'd can solve the riddle.

Fain. The other Mr. Fainwou'd.

Plain. Yes, sir; there is another gentleman so calling himself now in this house; and he was bearer of a letter of introduction from——

Fain. My letter of introduction! The rascal picked my pocket of it, in this very house, this morning. I see through it all!—I dare say your house is robbed by this same

Plain. A villain! Why, where is he, cousin? Here, John!—where are all the servants?

Enter John.

Plain. Where is Mr. Fainwou'd?

John. What, the other gentleman, sir?

Plain. The other, sir!—Then you knew this gentleman's name was Fainwou'd: and you never told me he was here this morning.

John. Yes, sir, I did; I sent you to him

Plain. You sent me to the other fellow

John. No, sir, I did not let in the other

Plain. I suppose he got in at the window, then.—But where is he now?

John. I'm sure I don't know, sir.—But I thought *that* gentleman was gone.

Fain. Why did you think so, sir?

John. Because, sir, the chaise is gone, that you came in.

Plain. What!

Fain Gone!

John. Yes, sir.

Plain. Why, then, the rascals ran off in it, and Peg—where is she? Where is my daughter?

Miss L. Dur. Gone with him, cousin.

John. Here they are, sir.

Enter Diddler, Peggy, and Sam.—Diddler, dancing and singing.

Plain. Sing away, my brave fellow; I'll soon change your note

Did. Thank ye, sir, but it is changed already. Sam, pay my debts to that young man, (*pointing to Fainwou'd*) and give him credit for a breakfast on my account. Ah, my dear old innocence! (*to Miss L. Dur.*) there's your purse again; when I'm at leisure, you shall have your explanation.

Miss L. Dur. Oh, false Adonis!

Plain. And now, sir, what have you to answer to.

Did. I plead guilty to it all. I've been a sad rogue; but, as a proof I've some conscience left, here's your daughter, just as I found her. Don't give her to me unless you like.

Plain. Give her to you! And pray, sir, what claim have you to her?

Did. "Not my deserts, but what I will deserve." My resolution to lead a new life, with the trifling collateral recommendation of ten thousand pounds in my pocket.

Plain. Ten thousand pounds in *your* pocket!

Did. In brief, sir, idle habits, empty pockets, and the wrath of an offended uncle, made me the shabby dog you see before you But my angry uncle has, on his death-bed, relented This fine fat-headed fellow arrested our flight through the town, to put into my hand this letter from his executor, announcing the handsome bequest I have just mentioned, and inclosing me a hundred-pound note as an earnest of his sincerity.

Sam. Yes, I'm witness to the truth of all that; and—

Did. (*stopping his mouth*) That's enough, Sam; the less we say the better.—I shall be steady now, Plainway, I shall indeed! I've felt too much my past degradation, not to make the best use of my present good fortune.

Plain. Um—I imagine you are the Mr. Mortimer she sometimes sighs about?

Did. The same, sir. At Bath, under that name, and under somewhat better appearances, I had the honour to captivate her Hadn't I, Peggy?

Peg. And isn't your name Mortimer?

Did. No, my dear, my legitimate appellation is Mr. Diddler.

Peg. What! and am I to have a lover of the name of Diddler?

Sam. I'm sure Mrs. Diddler's a very pretty name.

Did. Don't be rude, Sam.

Plain. Well, sir, your promises are fair, there's no denying; but whether it would be fair to attend to them, depends entirely upon that gentleman.

[*to Fainwou'd.*

Fain. As to me, Mr. Plainway, if your daughter has taken a fancy for another, I can't help it. Only let her refuse me respectfully, and I'm satisfied.

Did. You're a very sensible fellow, and we have all a very high respect for you.

Fain. I'm satisfied.

Did. But I shall not be satisfied without the hope, that all such poor and idle rogues as I have been, may learn, by my disgraceful example,

Howe'er to vice or indolence inclined,
By honest industry to RAISE THE WIND.

[*exeunt.*

END OF RAISING THE WIND.